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IN FOCUS

SHANMUKHA

SHANMUKHA heralds the Tamil New Year, Pramādi with Education on Music as its theme.. History, evolution, trends, innovation and more important, the spiritual background are brought to fore.

Musiri Subramania Iyer's life and music was in itself an 'education'. We pay tribute to this "Sangeeta Netha of Nayam" and teacher non pareil in his birth centenary year.

More information and education emanate from "Stringed Instruments in Carnatic Music" - a report on a 2-day conference which enlightened even the lay on the rich heritage of our classical wealth and complexities of instrumental music.

Putting Kuchipudi Dance Music in its proper perspective was not an easy task. However, the musician-mother of a renowned danseuse made efforts and set right some anomalies. **SHANMUKHA** reproduces a paper she presented in a Seminar.

Theatre Art - a look back; and "Kaalamum Kalaiganum" scan the renaissance in Tamil drama.

A short profile of the great Sankeerthanacharya - in Tamil adds to the theme of this issue.

A number of maestros entered "the pages of the History of Art" this quarter. **SHANMUKHA** pays tribute to that phenomenon, musical crusader Yehudi Menuhin, the "Sheikh of Nagaswaram" Sheik Chinna Maulana and the ever - buoyant Bannibai.

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"SANGEETA NETHA OF NAYAM"

Endu Daginado It was a rare moment when the Saint bard of Tiruvayyaru went Vilambam (slow paced) echoing his emotions, the agony, almost speechlessness on confronting a vision of void where his Lord dwelt till a few moments back.

"The song was spurred when Tyagaraja saw the Puja Mantap empty, the idol of his Ishta Devata, Lord Rama, which he held more precious than his own life and worshipped daily, missing. 'Where has He gone and hidden Himself?'"

"The slow pace was so natural although the Saint is known to have favoured Madhyama Kala (medium pace) making one more at ease with the pace, the melody, the rhythm and the Sahitya all of which oozed so smooth and sweet as to make his Gana Rasa the Draksha Rasa. And Raga Todi poured out all his anguish, evoking Karuna in the listener - spectators' mind. Rather it evoked the very anguish in everyone present there as the heart-rending melody contained the feelings that could not be missed. The Raga, the Sahitya, the situation all conveyed, a plot that was malicious but expressed in melody full of anguish and pathos."

"The incident that provoked the song was a sequel to the brothers' quarrel when the elder one in a fit of rage threw away the Puja Vighraha in the Kaveri and the younger Saint on his return from Unchavriti found the Sanctum empty and went into the heart wrenching kriti).

"You have to get into the composers' mind', 'they say in the West,' to give a correct interpretation'. Here too we have to get into the meaning, the situation, the cause and the core (Sthayi Bhava) of the song if we have to sing with Bhava. Could there be a better Raga than Todi to express the anguish, grief of the moment and the philosophy behind the disappearance?"

It was not only the Kriti that was in Vilambam. The exposition, the explanation, the enunciation-all were in Vilambam, in a tone in high-pitched Nayam that twanged the heartstrings of the listeners and registered the message.

The occasion was a 5-day lecture-demonstration on "Tradition in Carnatic Music, organised way back in early 'sixties by the Sree

Shanmukhananda Sabha, Delhi. And what a fund of information on theory, practice, tradition, convention, trends - a total education with spiritual background and Bhakti the speaker imparted!

It was a rare occasion when the great gentleman-scholar-musician of the century, Musiri Subramania Iyer took the podium and held the audience in raptures for over four hours daily. Reams could be written on the details he covered right from the philosophy of Swaravali, the Samanya Kalpita Sangeeta to the highly aesthetised individualistic Manodharma Sangeeta making it a Marga to spiritual elevation.

Gospel Truth

The language was lucid, the expression eloquent. He was as fluent in English as he was melodious in music. His choice of words to emphasise, explain and focus on a particular theme or a situation was very apt and had a spontaneity that amazed one. Could Lakshana (science or theory, in a nutshell Musicology) be as engrossing as Lakshya, the practical music?

When questioned off-stage, the maestro remarked with a smile: "Why separate the two? *Lakshiyattileya Lakshanamirukke*". (Lakshana is inherent in Lakshya). Sing.....and.....sing.....and sing - the norms, the nuances, the tenets will dawn on you and you can find what tradition is and feel what trends could add." Golden words and gospel truth!

That was a tremendous boost to a young student of music groping her way through classical music in all its facets.

Today the country is celebrating the birth centenary of this gentleman-musician, Musiri Subramania Iyer, who amidst the tumults of life gave Bhakti and Bhava their true import.

Born to a Sanskrit scholar Sankara Sastry - Seethalakshmi couple of Bommalapalayam on April 9, 1899, Musiri Subramania Iyer rose to be a role-model of a gentleman-musician leaving his imprint in every facet of life. Getting into 'roots' in everything - in song, in study, in literature and life - was his obsession or is it passion? Attending to everything with dignity and repose was his hall-mark. There was certain restraint, equanimity and impeccable ease in his handling. It is no exaggeration that he became synonymous with "Ingitam" in life and "Nayam" in music - a 'Sangeetha Netha of Nayam'.

He did not seem to be happy with the name of his native village Bommalapalayam, near Musiri. For a concert he was scheduled to perform at Musiri, the organisers inadvertently advertised as 'Musiri Subramania Iyer' and that was endorsed by his Guru Karur Chinnaswamy Iyer and the prefix stayed.

Subramania Iyer, after initial training under Narayanaswamy Iyer, learnt under two great stalwarts - Karur Chinnaswamy Iyer, the violinist and Sabesa Iyer, a great scholar - teacher who shaped many a musician of mark. It was through Sabesa Iyer who was a disciple of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer that the music world traced Musiri to the Sishya Parampara of Saint Tyagaraja. And he lived true to the Saint's message of worshipping Bhakti and Bhava as his life mission and imparted the same to his disciples with conviction and discipline. Having imbibed Lakshana from Sabesa Iyer, Musiri had his career carved finely as a performer captivating the audience and as a teacher *par excellence*.

Musiri's voice was his fortune, and the voice perched on a high pitch with an inherent honeyed sweetness and Nayam could soar to dizzy heights to unravel the nuances.

"The higher the pitch, more at home and at ease was he. He was a cosmonaut, a mountaineer who scaled the heights of the Tara Sthayi calmly, surely and convincingly. His voice had a tinge of feminine and nasal blend which lent added melody and freshness. Bhava was rich and stimulating. His forte lay in slow tempo and Dikshitar songs suited his genius well. His

singing conferred peace and solace to the disturbed mind, lulled the child to sleep and took the knowledgeable to the lofty realms of spiritual exhilaration and edgeable to the lofty realms of spiritual exhilaration and satisfaction. His rendition was the ecstatic outpourings of a heart that throbbed with feelings and a mind that assimilated the beauty and amaranthine perfume of Sahitya and Sangita - 'an outward expression of his inner delight.' Several songs came to prominence at his hands, observes 'Garland' Rajagopalán.

Musiri was an adept in Manodharma facets - especially Alapana and Niraval. His voice with felicitous elasticity unravelled the thematic essence of the Sahitya on the melody line. While his imaginative elongated Sancharas with sustained pauses brought to life Ragas in their evocative Bhavas and Kritis mirroring the composer's mind.

Who would not shed tears listening to his *Kanru Kuralikkettu Kanindu Varum Pasupol in Enraikku Siva Kripai Varumo* where Mukhari oozed all anguish. The same Raga had ecstatic overtones when he was through *Entani ne Varnintunu Sabari Bhagyamu* in Tyagaraja's description.

Few could match the poignant plea he poured out in Gopalakrishna Bharati's *Tiruvadi Saranam*. One could feel Sthayi Bhava seeking Karuna (compassion) through Kambhoji. The same Raga acquired a glow, a Gambhirya in *Oh, Rangasayi* and *Sri Subrahmanyaya Namasthe*.

Saraswati Manohari scaled a new high in his *Chinta deerchutakenta modira in Enta Vedukundu Raghava?* In this questioning of how long to wait for a Darshan of Rama there seemed to be a veiled Nindastuti - and Musiri's voice soaring high coolly expressed it. Another example is his *Pahi Ramachandra Raghava* in Yadukula Kambhoji. His Ragamalika Viruttam *Viritta Senchadai* was unsurpassed and Abheri in his rendition of *Nagumomu* spelt the Lakshana of the Raga intact. Those who make a blend of Bhimplas should listen to this. The master is no more; but his music is very much alive, capsuled in gramophone records and tapes. He made some of the songs his own in the style of rendition. They still remain unsurpassed and have therapeutic value.

Sublime Vilambam

Living among a galaxy of musicians who rose to eminence blazing their own Bani and in an era when Margadarshi Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar set the typical concert Paddhati with 'Madhyamakala' renditions, Musiri made his mark with his Vilambam. Not that he was averse to the medium tempo. He was equally an adept in Tyagaraja Kritis. Only he specialised in some of the gems which were better rendered in Vilambam. The Kritis referred to above are all in this genre. His cool, unruffled temperament also contributed to such musical disposition.

One of his close friends, an administrator-connoisseur S.Y. Krishnaswamy records in his *Memoris of a Mediocre Man* :

He specialised in some of the great compositions which demanded an exposition in a slow tempo so as to justify the inherent dignity of their content. Such songs as *Meru Samana* in Mayamalava Gowlai, "*Ramabana*" in Saveri, the Chaturdasa Ragamalika of Dikshitar and "*O ! Rangasayi*" in Kambhoji lose their character if they are rendered in an even slightly fast tempo. Their movement has to be processional and unhurried and because Musiri specialised in some of these great songs, the unwary and the uninitiated made the mistake of associating him with a slow movement. But although he preferred to sing in a slow tempo, which also suited his personal temperament, he was fully aware of the beauties of Madhyamakala. There is no such thing as an absolute slow or an absolute fast movement. These are relative to one's style of exposition and the same movement when sung by one musician will appear to be fast and restless and to be slow and tranquil when rendered by another. There is an inherent inner psychology here exemplified by Tyagaraja's song "*Santhamuleka Sowkya muledu*" (there is no joy except in tranquillity). This was primarily the guiding force in Musiri's life as well as art.

Musiri's Bhava - laden music which moved the listeners had high therapeutic effect. Whether he was aware of it or not the following incident confirms how his soulful music revived a 'restless soul', Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri from a severe cardiac condition. Confre R. Srinivasan and B. Leela write :

A little known incident in the life of Srinivasa Sastri, recorded by his devoted friend, D. V. Gundappa will be of interest to one and all.

Sastri's abiding interest in literature, particularly Sanskrit is common knowledge and his devotion to the *Ramayana* made his worship of Sri Ramachandra 'this side idolatry'. But what is not known to the public was his deep involvement in classical Carnatic music and his having deeply imbibed of the *Bhava* laden sentiments enshrined in the Kritis of the masters. He was equally moved by the *Thevarams* as well.

As Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, he had invited Gundappa to speak on Gokhale, but unfortunately he was not to be present for the function as he had to go to Delhi for official work. Gundappa stayed in the Lodge of the Vice-Chancellor till the return of the Master on a Sunday. The journey to and fro had evidently tired Sastri who was never in the best of health. He could barely have his lunch or even speak. Sastri continually pressed his hand to his chest and Gundappa (whose parents had been in bouncing health) could not fathom anything. Sastri was obviously in anginal pain and rested on his bed.

His private secretary, a young man, was sent to the doctor who was miles away. Since it would be some time for the doctor to arrive, D.V.G. was non-plussed as to how to offer relief to his friend and mentor. The only thing that he could do was to gently press his body in the hope that it would bring some physical comfort.

Lighting upon a gramophone, Gundappa requested the lady present to play some music - he selected these and while the music came pouring out, the master remained unconscious and lost to the world around him. After four to five records, she put on Musiri's *Pahi Ramachandra Raghava* (the composition of Tyagaraja in Yadukula Kambhoji). While the song was almost finished, Sastri half opened his eyes and whispered, 'Sir...once more sir'.

She played it again and again three or four times. Gradually he recovered consciousness. His eyes were moist. It appeared as though he had had a vision of his favourite Ramachandra. He expressed the hope that he would hear this in his last moments.

When he passed away in April 1946, the All India Radio, Madras after announcing this, played another deeply moving song of Tyagaraja - *Rara Mayinti Daka (Asaveri)*.

It was the repetitious playing of the song of Musiri and its deeply moving sentiments that revived Sastri even before the doctor arrived. It is quite likely that Musiri might not have known of the magic quality of his music that could revive a sagging spirit miraculously.*

Exceptional Guru

The master-musician was a teacher nonpareil. The quality of training he imparted to his disciples in Kriti rendition, in the perspective of Niraval, with a feel of Sahitya, the emotive variations that could be spun into the Sahitya-Sangeetha stances remain unparalleled. Stern disciplinarian he was. He would not let the authentic patanthara go haphazardly learnt. He would not allow notation or script-rendition, the lessons were repeated till everyone got them perfect in their system. And as for Manodharma aspects he expected everyone to cultivate his/her own style according to his/her imagination and vocal power. A characteristic methodology he carried even as the Principal of the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras, which ensured the extension of Gurukul norms in institutionalised coaching.

He never openly appreciated a Chela. He let the appreciation come from others and believed in constant Sadhaka to assimilate, polish and articulate one's own form and style. To ensure this he arranged for Chamber music concerts by eminent musicians and lecture-demonstrations by renowned artistes and musicologists in the college. It was 'living-in' training for the students in the college, learning, listening, assimilating and imbibing and performing.

One had only to listen to the music of his disciples, T.K. Govinda Rao, Mani Krishnaswamy, Bombay Sisters - Saroja - Lalitha, Padmaja Srinivasan, nearer home T. R. Balamani, to mention a few, to testify to Musiri's teaching methodology.

His speech, as earlier noted, was an extension, rather 'a continuation of a concert' as his friend SYK put it. A voracious reader of literature, he spoke eloquently in English as he sang melodiously. Oxford Dictionary, Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, Pears Encyclopaedia were his company. His proficiency in this language was one of the reasons for his successful administration of the Central College of Carnatic Music, in

his interaction with visiting artistes, especially foreigners to the College. His speech after each occasion, a concert or other event, used to be a memorable segment of the whole programme.

Writes his friend SYK :

His speech was always like a continuation of the concert. It was invested with clarity and sincerity and an astonishing choice of precise words. I still have a few of his letters and the following extract from one of them is illustrative of the man. "You say you have lost touch with the world. Seeing the world as I do where there is no sense of values nor any honesty, I will be quite happy to lose touch with the world. If only I could keep the wolf away. I am hoping against hope that there may be a chance for me to come across the handful of people like you who live all by themselves in which I would like to be one if I get admission to the inner circle. Can I ? I hope so."

His administrative acumen helped him organise the Tyagaraja Aradhana at Tiruvayyaru. During his stewardship during 1939-68 he not only brought about unity of three warring factions but also made a great stride getting the Nagaswara artistes and women musicians, to quote Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, onto the Aradhana stage to pay their Anjali. Also the congregational singing of the Pancharatna Kritis practised today the world over as a mark of Anjali to the Saint was his idea.

Musiri had a stint with the Tamil films too. Donning Saint Tukharam, the Saint-poet of Maharashtra, he made a great impact with his melodious music. His fascination for S.G. Kittappa whom he emulated in his early years bore fruit.

Honours and titles came his way relatively early. He was Sangita Kalanidhi at forty. Sangeet Natak Academy Award and Fellowship followed and Tamil Isai Sangham conferred on him 'Isai Perarignar'.

Homage to the maestro would not be complete without expressing our gratitude to him for the guidance, direction he gave, in establishing Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, Mumbai.

-Sulochana Rajendran

"Stringed Instruments In Carnatic Music"

With a 2-day Seminar on "Carnatic Music in the 21st Century" held in March, 1998, the Fine Arts Society, Chembur, Mumbai, heralded a series of annual conferences devoted to the different streams of Carnatic Music. This year it was "Stringed Instruments in Carnatic Music", to be followed by one on "Wind Instruments" next year and on "Laya Vadya", the year after.

Conducted on February 27th and 28th, this year's conference was inaugurated by Violin maestro, Sangeetha Kalanidhi T. N. Krishnan and the Chief Guest, Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna of the Mumbai High Court presided. Sangeetha Kalanidhi M. S. Gopalakrishnan moderated the sessions.

The first day was devoted to discussions on papers presented on Vina and Chitravina, and on the second day, on Violin and Mandolin.

A complete set of the Conference papers was given to the delegates well in advance, which enabled them to study and send questions prior to the sessions. Hence, at each session, only a synopsis of the paper was read, followed by a question-answer session; this resulted in purposeful deliberations.

The sessions opened with the key-note paper titled "Yazh to Guitar-an Overview" by Violin Vidwan Prof. V.V. Subramanyam. In his unavoidable absence, V. Subramanian, Hon. Secretary of FAS, gave a summary of the paper. Dr. Lokanadha Sarma deputised for Prof. Subramanyam in answering questions on the paper.

Other papers listed for the first day were those on Vina by E. Gaayathri and Jayanthi R. Kiran, on Vina - Playing Technique by Prof. R. Visweswaran, on Chitravina by N. Ravikiran and on Baala Veenai by T.R. Balakrishnan - the last 'three' gave demonstrations also. Jayanthi Kiran could not attend the Conference.

Four papers on Violin were presented on the second day. One each by G.J. R. Krishnan, Sriram Parasuram, Dr. M. Narmada and R. R. Ramakrishnan, Sriram Parasuram and Narmada gave demonstrations also. U. Srinivas and Suresh Kumar presented papers on Mandolin, the latter deputised for Srinivas; he also gave demonstration on the Mandolin.

The papers on Viola by V.L. Kumar and on Guitar by Prasanna Ramaswamy were taken as read as they could not make it to the Conference. The absence of Kumar also necessitated cancellation of the demonstration concert scheduled on that day.

At the end of the day-long absorbing deliberations and lecdems, the delegates were treated to a concert in the evening - a Jugalbandi by Ulhas Bapat on Santoor and G. J. R. Krishnan on the Violin on the first day, and a solo violin concert by T. N. Krishnan on the second day.

An additional attraction of the Conference was an exhibition of various types of Yazh, Vinas made of different kinds of wooden material such as bamboo strips, and several musical instruments in miniature, courtesy Dr. Lokanadha Sarma.

Yazh To Guitar

In his key-note paper on "Yazh to Guitar", Prof. Subramanyam traced the origin of stringed instruments, including various kinds of Yazh, the invention and evolution of other stringed instruments (bowed and plucked), the emergence of the Tanjavur Vina, as also the entry of Guitar and Mandolin in the Carnatic Music system. The salient points of his paper were :

In the olden days, the term 'Vina' was used to denote all kinds of stringed instruments, plucked and bowed.

It was the inability of the Yazh to produce Gamakas, due to its structural limitations, that necessitated the invention of instruments such as Vina.

Experiments to take Vina as an accompaniment to vocal music were not popular because of its inability to provide continuous sound.

Exalted Status of Vina

Gaayathri presented a 19-page, 2-part paper on the exalted status of Vina in Carnatic Music. She laboured the point that it is an ancient and divine instrument, and compared its parts and sounds with the Vedas, the Gayatri Mantra and the spinal column of human beings.

Stating that the Sapta Swaras of the Vina and the seven Chakras in the spinal column (Muladhara, etc.) are interrelated, she made the profound statement that "Vina playing as the highest form of Yoga brings about the merging of Jivatma and Paramatma only when the Vina player handles the Vina through the sheer force and power of the Prana or Kundalini Shakti arising from Mooladhara and not merely by moving his fingers across the frets and strings". Not being evolved souls, even the Vainikas present in the audience did not seek any clarification. That a true Vina player should be a Nada-Yogi, seemed to be the essence of her submission.

However, there was discussion on one point, because that happened to be rather mundane. She had stated that "When the vina string is plucked once, the Nada wave emanating from it takes nearly seven minutes to travel back and forth between the bridge of the vina to the beginning frets of the vina". Asked whether the resonance of a single pluck would last that long, Gaayathri replied in the affirmative, adding that much of it is not audible to the human ears. It was Justice Shri Srikrishna who lent some semblance of credibility to her statement. He reasoned that the duration could be seven *nimisha* that a *Nimisha* in Sanskrit meant the unit of time taken for one twinkling of the eyes, and that the word 'Nimisha' might have been erroneously translated as a minute in 'English'.

In the absence of Jayanthi Kiran, a synopsis of her paper "About Veena - You think - We Create" was given by Vidyasankar Sundaresan, who also presented a supplementary paper of his own, titled "The Veena - Historical and Literary Notes".

Jayanthi Kiran dealt with the origin, structure and types of Vina, its divinity and the distinct styles of Vina playing. She also touched upon amplification, the problems posed by the unwieldy size of the instrument, particularly to the present-day exponents who have to make frequent travails, and the attempts being made at reducing its size or make it in parts (split-vina). Vidyasankar also covered more or less the same ground in his paper.

About the split-Vina Vidyasankar felt that pragmatism demands that it be given an earnest trial. Some Vainikas are already using it. He said that the materials used in the construction of the Vina could be improved upon with great advantage to the tonal quality, without compromising on the sensitivities dictated by tradition. In this connection, he also referred to the use of more than one mike to pick up and transmit the full complement of the natural sounds emanating from the strings, the fret-board and the resonator.

Prof. Visweswaran and Gaayatri, as also some of the delegates, did not agree with Vidyasankar. They were opposed to tinkering with the 'integrity and divinity' of the instrument which, to them, are beyond compromise. They also feared that such alterations would affect the "precision of the production of sound".

Vina playing Techniques

The post-lunch session commenced with a lecture by Prof. Visweswaran on Vina playing. He claimed that he has innovated his own fingering techniques, sans guidance of a guru, in order to translate his concepts of human voice into Vina playing and those techniques were entirely in accordance with tradition.

The session was meant for demonstration, but at the request of the moderator-in-charge, Prof. Visweswaran had to spend considerable time in answering questions, most of which were of no consequence. In the event, he could demonstrate only three or four techniques; he listed out the rest: production of micro-tonal Swaras, employment of diminishing and augmented Swaras and Tanam techniques.

Prof. Visweswaran was emphatic that for rendering compositions on Vina, the player should have the correct knowledge of the Sahitya so that he could adopt the appropriate techniques. He demonstrated this point by first singing and then playing 'Balagopala' (Bhairavi) and 'Raminchuva revarura' (Suposhini). (The latter Kriti is very pleasing when played on a string instrument.) Sometimes, one may have to give accent on certain musical phrases to convey the Sahitya. Demonstrating this point, he played 'Uyyala Luga Vayya' (Nilambari). He played 'Rama bana (Saveri) to illustrate use of off-fret notes. The last piece of demonstration was the elongation of the sound of a single pluck and weaving of musical phrases thereon. He called it 'singing of the strokeless Vina'.

Chitravina

Ravikiran was the next speaker. Giving a synopsis of his paper, he said that the Chitravina, the 21-stringed fretless lute, was till some years ago, known as Gottuvadyam and that its old name of Chitravina was restored to it at his suggestion by the Music Academy Conference under the presidency of D.K. Jayaraman.

Describing the characteristic features of the instrument Ravikiran said that though the name 'Chitravina' was mentioned even in Bharata's 'Natya Sastra', it emerged as a concert instrument only about 150 years ago, thanks to Sakharama Rao. It was propagated by Sakharama Rao's disciple (and Ravikiran's grandfather) Gottuvadyam Narayana Iyengar who increased the number of the main strings and also added sympathetic strings.

The Chitravina is one of the very few instruments in the world (with more than 20 strings) and probably the only one in India which has fine tuning provision for each of its 21 strings.

Ravikiran said that he too has made innovations more out of necessity rather than any obsession on my part to do 'something different' towards improvement of the tonal quality and amplification. He has provided it with contact mikes and magnetic pick-ups, and is using Teflon slides instead of the conventional ones made of ebony, steel, stone or horn.

In the course of the lecture he made the following observations:

Chitravina should be played with an awareness of the Sahitya and its meaning. This is called playing in vocal style.

Plucking techniques employed in the contact mike attached instrument are different from those used in instruments without mike attachment.

The tone of the Chitravina is closest to the human voice.

With the use of appropriate mikes, even microscopic nuances and subtle tones can be conveyed to a large audience. Contact mikes, properly used, enhance the sustainability of the sound. However a mike is no substitute for good playing techniques.

He uses electro-magnetic pick-ups from the bridge and the body, and both the sounds are mixed before it is amplified.

As far as possible, he brings out Brigas similar to the ones of vocal music.

Because the Chitravina has no frets, there is no need to learn any fingering techniques. It is also easy to learn as it is laterally played. However, since it has no frets, the margin of error is also high and, therefore, one should have good Swara Jnana and Sahitya Jnana, coupled with good practice.

Compositions can be played in vocal style. However, the potentiality of the instrument should also be put to good use. It should be a judicious amalgam of the spirit of vocal music and the melodious beauty of the instrument.

(I understand that this principle was known as 'Vadya-dharmi' in olden days.)

The essence of tradition is the maintenance of the standard and quality of music. Any innovation that contributes to betterment of quality becomes a tradition in due course. For example, he is using Teflon slides, as "Teflon is probably the smoothest material known to man", and "its almost frictionless surface brings out", as he remarks, "a very pure tone, eliminating string - slide noises when slides made of ebony, steel, stone or bison horn are used."

He has experimented with shortening the length of the Chitravina, and some of his students are using instruments of reduced sizes. He is however using the present instrument from his fifth year.

Baala Veenai

Ravikiran was followed by P. R. Balakrishnan with a demonstration on Bala Veenai which he has invented. It is 27 inches long with a 10 inch Kudam and has 14 frets and weighs 2.75 kg. It can speak 3 octaves, Balakrishnan claimed. He said that the Baala Veenai is the result of more than a decade of research. Its principal advantage is its easy portability. Being made of fibre-glass it is unbreakable.

Neither the instrument nor Balakrishnan's demonstration thereon seems to have appealed to the delegates. Perhaps, they got an impression that it was more a sales promotion technique to market a new, untested product than presenting a research piece awaiting experimentation. (The name Baala Veenai at least suggests one thing that it is in its infancy!)

Violin - Entry & Adoption

Violin and Mandolin formed the second day's agenda, as those on Viola and the Guitar, had to be abandoned as already noted.

The first speaker on the subject was, G.J.R. Krishnan. Briefly citing evidence to the existence

of bowed instruments similar to the Violin in sculptures as also references to them in musical treatises, Krishnan gave the genealogy of the instrument and its evolution in the West. He gave the by now familiar facts about the entry of the Violin in Carnatic Music and the contributions made towards 'Indianising' it by a string of virtuosi from Tirukodikaval Krishna Iyer down to the present trio - T.N. Krishnan, Lalgudi Jayaraman and M. S. Gopalakrishnan.

(Krishnan took the trouble of bringing old records [in Tamil] from his family heirloom - and reading out excerpts therefrom - to support the statement he had made earlier that Kinnari, a Violin-like bowed instrument, was used as accompaniment in the Bhajans conducted in Tyagaraja's house.)

He said that though the Indian exponents of Violin were aware of the various playing techniques prevalent in West, they chose only those that enriched our Raga-based music. It is due to such continuous experimentation that the art of accompaniment and the art of solo performance have now attained a high degree of finesse he added.

Though Sahitya which is cardinal to Carnatic Music has enriched the art form, Krishnan felt that it is in a way a constraint on fully exploiting the potentialities of the instrument. Stating that absolute music is the one which is devoid of lyrics, Krishnan hoped that the present generation of instrumentalists would explore the possibilities of composing musical suites exclusively for each musical instrument, independent of vocal-based music, with Carnatic Music as base, a la AIR Vadya Vrinda.

Prof. Visweswaran and MSG were of the view that without Bhakti and Sahitya there can be no Carnatic Music. Their opinion seemed to be shared by a large section of the audience too, though some did agree with Krishnan. Krishnan clarified that he meant no disrespect to vocal-based Kriti form of music. He only suggested that musical suites could be composed to utilise the

potentialities of each instrument, preserving the tradition of Carnatic Music. He further said that devotion to God is not an exclusive property of Hindus; in his opinion, devotion to music is itself devotion to God.

A member from the audience said that Sahitya is the distinctive feature of Carnatic Music. Narmada, who was also in the audience, remarked that lyrics are only mnemonic aids to rendering Raga-based music such as ours.

(In reply to question from the audience, the moderator-in-charge said that there is no place for secular songs in Carnatic Music).

Violin -As Accompaniment

The next speaker was Narmada. She gave a gist of her paper. The Power of Violin and its Role as an Accompaniment in Indian Music".

Narmada said that the Violin has emerged (in India) as the best possible accompaniment (to vocal music) by virtue of its capacity to provide continuity of sound; and its ability to reproduce microtones and other nuances of vocal music. Sahitya aspects are brought out in Violin by placement of accents, she said.

According to her, the role of the Violinist is to give melodic support to the vocalist and thereby enhance the standard and quality of the concert. To achieve this objective, the accompanist should understand and follow the mode and style of presentation of the vocalist, which differ from vocalist to vocalist. (Striking a personal note, MSG observed that the ability to follow the styles of different vocalists can be acquired only after a long period of experience.) By accompanying several vocalists, a violinist can also evolve his own style for presenting solo concerts.

Asked about foreign-made Violins vis-a-vis Indian-made ones, she said that the tonal quality of foreign violins is of a high order. This is because of several reasons - the violin-makers there possess advanced know-how, they get the

required high quality material, and they have also the facility to undergo specialised courses in violin-making.

Answering a question unrelated to her paper, Narmada said that the principal objective of the great Vaggeyakaras appears to be the portrayal of the Raga Bhava in their compositions. "They were not keeping a text book before them while composing". And that is why we find that some of the Kritis do not conform strictly to the grammar of the scale in every respect.

Singing On The Violin

"Singing On the Violin" was the interesting title of the paper of Sriram Parasuram. He began by stating that purely from the point of view of acoustic principles, only the Violin (as also Flute and Nagaswaram) can qualify for vocal music. Vina with all its divinity and antiquity cannot maintain continuity of sound. Hence Violin is the only instrument which is capable of coming close to making Indian classical music.

He said that for singing on the Violin, the exponent should have mastered both instrumental techniques and intonational techniques. He should also have a thorough understanding of its complexities, subtleties and sensibilities.

In his vocal and instrumental demonstration, he mainly dealt with Carnatic Music; he also touched upon Hindustani Music. He sang/played Kritis and Bandishes, and highlighted Rakti Prayogas and Manodharma Sangita in Carnatic Music.

He said an instrumentalist in Carnatic Music should sing within himself; then only he can translate it into playing. This is because they are not just playing the swaras but the sahitya itself. In order to be effective, he should learn the Kritis thoroughly; he should have an analytical approach to translate his ideas on the instrument, and the ability to do it and, above all, he should have the guidance from a Guru.

He said the exponent is playing Violin and not on the Violin. He should treat the Violin as an extension of his person.

He also demonstrated what he called bowing choreography, the objective of which is to bring out optimum music from the instrument.

The last two papers of the day were on Mandolin (the first, a brief one by U. Srinivas, who could not make it to the conference), and a very detailed one containing technical details by Suresh Kumar, a senior disciple of Srinivas.

Adaptation of Mandolin

A Mandolin, descendant of the lute family, is a pear-shaped string instrument with a fretted finger board. It is a solo instrument of Western music; it is also used in orchestra. In India it has been in use in light music and in film music. The credit for making it fit for solo concerts in Carnatic Music goes to U. Srinivas; hence his popular name 'Mandolin Srinivas'.

Srinivas retained the scale, fretted finger board and the tuning head, but replaced the four pair of strings with four single strings, and upon his father's advice, added one more, the fifth string, for Mandra Sthayi.

Giving a summary of his own paper, Suresh Kumar dealt on the basic design of the two types of Mandolins - the acoustic Mandolin and the electric (solid block) Mandolin, the innovations made by Srinivas as also his own design, which he calls the Dragon. (The solid block Mandolin does not have a resonator and hence an amplifier has to be attached.)

He explained the playing techniques and demonstrated them on his Dragon (which is a solid block Mandolin). These included the basic fingering pattern, the Gamaka techniques, playing in Gayaki style, techniques used for playing a series of virtually seamless notes and vocalisation of the notes. He also demonstrated the necessity of amplification in an instrument like

solid block Mandolin. Without amplification the sound of that Mandolin would be audible within a radius of two feet only. The amplifier, he said, besides amplifying also gives colour to the sound.

To demonstrate rendition of Gamakas on the Mandolin, he played select phrases from *Vallabha Nayakasya* (Begada), *Sarojadala netri* (Sankarabharanam), and *Nannukannatalli* (Kesari), as also a brief *Alapana* of *Sahana*. He also demonstrated vocalisation of short and long vowels, consonants (including hard consonants) and double consonants (such as 'three') that occur in the *Sahitya* of *Kritis*.

Questionnaire Session

Along with the conference papers, the organisers had circulated a questionnaire to elicit the views of the delegates on a few questions. They related to advisability of composing pieces exclusively for musical instruments; use of modern technology and contemporary material for altering the instruments and for enhancing the quality of tonal reproduction and amplification; fusion music; and whether the synthesizer would push conventional musical instruments from open concerts to chamber music.

A panel consisting of four instrumentalists was formed and they were requested to give their views on the questionnaire. The panel consisted of Prof. Visweswaran, MSG, Vidyasankar and Kiranavali. The views of Visweswaran and MSG (let us call this group as group I) were almost identical; so were the latter two (Group II). The opinions of the delegates were not known as the replies were under compilation.

Group I's view was that all instrumentalists should follow the vocal style as closely as possible, and there is no need for compositions separately for instruments.

Group II admitted that Carnatic Music is vocal based, but it is worthwhile to compose pieces for instruments. What ultimately matters

is music. Is not Nada itself divine according to our tradition? they queried.

On use of technology, group I had no objection provided it did not damage traditionality; (whatever it may mean). Group II said that it was already being done. Any technology was to be welcomed if it helped overcome the existing limitations of the instruments and enhance the quality and standard of music, they felt.

That there is no place for fusion music in Carnatic stream was the near-unanimous opinion of the panel. Only Suresh Kumar said that the fusion music could also be made meaningful.

On the entry of synthesizer all the four felt that it would not push out instruments to chamber music halls. No synthesizer would ever replace instrumental or vocal music, they averred.

Valedictory Session

Shri C. R. Balakrishna and Shri V. Ramadurai, Vice Chairman and Chairman respectively of FAS, expressed happiness at the content and quality of presentation and participation, as also the participation of music teachers and students in large numbers. The Conference helped great awareness of the greatness of Carnatic Music. MSG gave the valedictory speech.

V. Subramanian, the architect of the Conferences, proposed a vote of thanks.

It was announced that the third conference in the series would be held in March 2000 on "Wind Instruments".

The Conference : An Appraisal

The Conference was a resounding success in many respects. It was informative and educative, it enabled even a lay person to get enlightened on the rich heritage of our classical musical wealth, and the complexities of instrumental music.

The lecdems and the presentations provided ample proof, if proof was ever needed, that innovation is not antipathic to tradition; on the contrary, it only enriches the latter. Every successful innovator swells the rank of tradition-founders. All trail-blazers were innovators in their time. It also became evident that true innovations can be made only on the solid foundation of tradition.

Participation of youngsters in the deliberations was a pleasant and welcome feature of the Conference.

Neither the participating artists, young or old, nor the delegates/Rasikas who filled the auditorium on both the days, apprehended any threat to Carnatic Music from fusion or similar kind of music of popular brand.

The young artistes who presented papers and gave lec-dems deserve a word of praise. All of them - Ravikiran, Sriram Parasuram, Narmada, Vidyasankar and Suresh Kumar - proved themselves to be thorough and well-informed in their subjects; and they have also attained commendable mastery in their respective instruments. They have a research bent, are open to new ideas and are candid and articulate. They were unruffled, diplomatic and tactful while fielding questions, a few of which bordered on inanity. In fact, they carried the day.

Their presentations and lecdems showed that they too, like their elders, are rooted in tradition. They are, however, compelled to experiment and innovate by the necessities of the modern age. Their innovations are aimed at enriching and enhancing the tonal quality of the music, at exploring the potentialities of the instrument and at overcoming the structural limitations. They are also deeply devoted to classical music. All these augur well for the future of Carnatic Music.

Learning from the experience of the first seminar held last year, the organisers planned and conducted the Conference with consider-

able foresight. Conference papers were supplied in advance, sessions were held more or less according to schedule, questions were made to focus on the topic concerned, and opportunities were given to a fairly large number of delegates to put questions or seek clarifications.

However, very interesting lecdems had to be curtailed to keep to time, which left both the artistes and the delegates somewhat less than satisfied. If a conference of this kind is to achieve its objectives, it should be confined to a single instrument. The Sangeet Research Academy, in association with Music Forum, had organised two-day seminars each on Sitar, Sarod, Sarangi, Tabla and Tanpura.

Incidentally, the non-inclusion of the Tambura in a conference of stringed instruments appears inexplicable. (It is gratifying that at least one speaker, Sulochana Rajendran, drew the attention of the organisers to this omission.)

Tambura has remained a classical instrument of the stringed group from time immemorial. It was the drone of the Tambura that heralded a music concert. It is unfortunate that it is falling a hapless victim to the technological onslaught. Though it is slowly disappearing from the South Indian concert stages, it is still retained in Hindustani Music recitals. Music lovers would feel happy if the Tambura is retained on the Carnatic Music scene, in addition to the electronic sruti box - a practice some musicians and Sabhas follow.

- S. Sankaranarayanan

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THEATRE ART - A LOOK BACK

Drama has been a source of entertainment since time immemorial. Music, Dance and Drama have been an integral part of our lives. "The world is a stage and all men and women are actors in the drama of life," said William Shakespeare, the all-time great dramatist. Yes, men and women play their roles on this world stage as designed and divined or ordained by the Almighty, the Supreme Sutradhari.

But what is drama, the art? Apart from a source of entertainment, a relaxation, it is a reflection of what goes on in real life. There is however a difference. In real life everything is natural-the lives the humans live, the emotions they go through, the events that happen and the trials and tribulations they suffer, or the success and victory they achieve. But in drama, everything is imaginary - the actors enact, evoke and emote what is set in the story line. There are so much extraneous elements in the form of artistic embellishments, in cast, dialogue, delivery and decor, in the overall presentation which effect an impact.

From mere entertainment, drama has, during the centuries, become a highly sophisticated theatre art. In its evolution down the centuries, this art has reflected the culture of a nation, its people etc. As for Tamil Drama, Natakam (Drama) has been one of the integral parts of Muththamizh, the other two being Tamil literature and Tamil Isai (music). "Iyal, Isai, Natakam form Muththamizh".

The word 'Trinity' has had great significance in our life and culture. We have a Trinity of Gods. A Trinity of Saint Composers, Saint Tyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, enriched our Karnatak music and etched their times in golden letters as the Golden Era of Karnatak music. And it is again to a Trinity-Sankardas Swamy, Paridimar Kalaignar (Suryanarayana Sastri) and Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar -that Tamil Drama owes its rejuvenation and renaissance.

The trio turned a new leaf in the history of theatre art. They gave it a real perspective, added new dimension. Made it more educative with morals and values.

What was a folk "Koothu" was evolved into a theatre art in the early years of the 20th century by Sankardas Swamy. Where music alone prevailed earlier, he introduced dialogue, sprinkled with musical sequences. Himself a playwright and actor-composer, his dialogue and songs were rich in literary flourish and musical nuances. In a way his was a great service to the drama and Tamil Isai. T. K. Shanmukham was his prime disciple.

Suryanarayana Sastri, turned Paridimar Kalaignar, codified the grammar of theatre art and wrote many works in Tamil comparable to Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti in Sanskrit and Shakespeare and Ibsen in English. His plays like *Rupavati*, *Kalavati* were significant works of Tamil literature. His *Nataka Ilakkana Nool*, is a monumental work in theatre grammar.

And Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar, hailed as "Nataka Tandai" (Father of Drama), reached the theatre to the people with all its sophistication. He had many firsts to his credit. Modern theatre with its props and paraphernalia was his idea. Amateur theatre units were his creations. He raised the respect of the actors from "Koothadi" to "Kalaignar". Himself a dramatist, playwright and organiser, he was an actor *par excellence* too. Founding his "Suguna Vilasa Sabha", a theatre unit, Sambanda Mudaliar wrote as many as 94 plays - comedy, satire, tragedy, social plays *et al*.

Publicity was another area he successfully ventured into. Distributing bit notices was a practice he tapped to publicise a play. And he not only participated in Theatre conferences, organised by TKS Brothers, but also gave a fillip to Tamil Theatre movement. His *Sabhapathi*, *Leelavathi* - *Sulochana*, *Macbeth*, *Manohara* etc.,

were great hits and great leaders of the day like R. K. Shanmugam Chettiar, Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Sathyamoorthy had acted in his "Suguna Vilas" productions. TKS Brothers carved a niche for themselves.

The era saw another facet forging ahead in the field of theatre - the plays with social themes. In this Nawab Rajamanickam stood out supreme.

There have been mythological plays recreating the world of Gods, the episodes of Puranas and Itihasas. "Nataka Kavalari" Manohar

has excelled himself in this*. It needs no mention that historical plays found their way into this genre too.

Recent trend has been to make a 'modern art' of theatre, and quite a number of professional and amateur theatre groups have come up presenting simple to serious plays, abstract ones, plays with no themes or mainly weaving a story of sequences, for pastime. Some give food for thought, some merely titillate. An audience ruminate sometime or just enjoy the mirth for the moment. Thus goes on the drama on cultural stage.

- Kinnari

* We carry in this issue Manohar's impressions on "Kaalumalaiyum" in Tamil.

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Kuchipudi Dance Music

By Vakkalanka Sarla

(The author is a singer and composer and is the mother of the famous danseuse Swapnasundari. Recently Smt. Sarala passed away leaving a void in the art field. Her paper speaks volumes of her concern for music and dance and her efforts to take tradition along contemporary trends. SHANKUKHA pays tribute by reproducing the paper presented in the music Seminar during Kuchipudi Mahotsav'93, Mumbai.)

The idea of composing music for Kuchipudi dances occurred to me and I felt the need for it when my daughter Swapnasundari learnt the dance and started giving public performances.

I watched the performances of several renowned artists. I had one major observation - lack of variety in items as well as in music. I was shocked to find that original items were altered by so many people that it was almost impossible to identify the original text (eg., *Bhamakalapam*).

It is the inherent beauty and strength of Kuchipudi dance form which earned fame for Andhra and started attracting the attention of non-Andhras in the recent times. Every artiste feels the urge to innovate while following the traditions and the search is constantly on. It is the touchstone for creativity. Where should the change and innovation be brought about - is it in the form or music or technique or the decor and make-up? Many Nattyacharyas and gurus are experimenting with these aspects and innovating without altering the traditional dance form.

About my experiments in the field of Kuchipudi dance music. Popular ragas like Sankarabharanam, Bhairavi, Todi, Athana, Surati, Mohana etc., were being extensively used in traditional Kuchipudi dance music. Though they were rendered in Carnatic style, traces of other ragas could be seen in them (for example, Bhairavi had traces of Mukhari, Mohana had traces of Sankarabharanam or Bilahari). Earlier gurus probably did not bother about this

adulteration. Every raga has its own identity and form. I felt it necessary to correct the aberrations and bring about purity of form.

Another feature is the extensive use of raga Mohana in all items of Kuchipudi music. While I agree that it is a very pleasant raga, I feel the dominance of one raga would certainly bring down the enjoyment or *Rasaanubhuti*. I made alterations in the music of Sabdams, Tarangams and other items originally composed in raga Mohana. I also tried to introduce some not-so-popular Tarangams in performances.

In *Bhamakalapam*, I tuned the verses of 'Madana Madana' to Shanmukhapriya. Though some people feel it was against the tradition, I felt encouraged by the positive response from the audiences. Similarly, In Dasaavatara dance I retained the first stanza in Mohana and composed the remaining ten stanzas in different attractive ragas. This composition also has become very popular. In this way, I made appropriate changes in the traditional style of music.

In case of Jatis we had to make a large number of amendments. Some Jatis are not set to proper Tala and confuse the dancer as well as the mridangam player. They were taught to students after setting them properly to Vilamba, Madhyama and Druta tempos.

Bhamakalapam was subjected to so many alterations and additions. It is difficult to identify the original text and so far no efforts were made in that direction. It is necessary to conduct

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research in this area to present correct history of Kuchipudi dance to the future generations.

I do not find many new verse compositions being used in Kuchipudi dance. Numerous such compositions can be found in ancient Telugu literature. Rajani and Krishna Sastry wrote dance dramas specially for Kuchipudi. In our effort to present new compositions I had adopted the poetic works of Muddu Palani, "*Raadhikaa Saantvanam*" as a ballet. The main problem I faced in such adaptations was composing dance music for Seesapadyam metre and Vritas and the part selected for adaptation consisted of a large number of them. Instead of setting them to the natural Khanda gati which does not give variety, I had to bring changes in the talas. I selected appropriate ragas depending on the context and language and had to change the tempo of the talas in some places.

Some examples are :

Gurukuchakumbhamul - Charukesi - Vilamba laya -
Khanda gati
Kalugunaa Kannula karavu - Patadeep - Vilamba laya
- Khanda gati
Naa Knshnadevuni - Mohana - Adi - Madhya laya
Maravagaa daagilimootalu - Tisra gati - Chaturasra
gati - Madhya laya

The verse '*Chaturasamarati...*' was rendered in the background without percussion, in raga Jaijayawanti. I adopted Sanskrit *slokas* and Telugu verses from classical literature by setting them to ragas and talas suitable to dance. I have used Hindustani music alongside Carnatic style for two reasons. Andhras are familiar with Hindustani music through dramas and music concerts. So I felt that it would not have any adverse impact on the performance. In some places people expressed that I should present Kuchipudi items in the local language. I selected songs in Hindi, Bengali, Avadhi, Marathi, Goanese and other languages and set them to Hindustani music. Earlier some composers tried to set Hindi devotional songs to Carnatic music. But they were not accepted by the public on a large scale.

I did not experience any difficulty in setting *slokas* or verses or songs in Telugu, Sanskrit and other languages to Hindustani music.

Though I had initial doubts regarding the suitability of compositions in other languages to Kuchipudi dance, the positive responses of audiences amply demonstrated that Kuchipudi dance is becoming popular with people of different regions. In addition to popular ragas like Malkauns, Bhoopali, Sindhu Bhairavi, Kalavati etc., I used some rare ragas and not-so-popular ragas like Bhatiar, Khanchavati, Maru Behag etc., for my compositions. I am happy to say that all of them found acceptance with the audience. I can say with confidence that, as long as there is no violation of the grammar of Kuchipudi dance, compositions from any language can be used without reservation. I can cite the ballets *Krishna Kadhaavali* and *Om Shakti* as examples.

In my quest for novelty I was attracted by the *Shringara Keertanas* of Saint Annamacharya. As I started reading them again and again, my devotion to the great Saint had gone up and I could find hitherto unknown beauty in them. Annamacharya's literature is like an ocean which is an inexhaustible source of diamonds, pearls and gems. I tried to fathom the depth and meaning of his *Keertanas* with the help of scholars.

I selected some verses which I felt were suitable for dance, composed the music in both Carnatic and Hindustani *ragas* and released them as a cassette.

The number of ragas used for the compositions, inscribed on copper plates, is only eighty. Some of them have undergone substantial change in their form. There could be no doubt about the beauty of those *keertanas* sung with aesthetic devotion by Saint Annamacharya, irrespective of the raga. Can we bring the same feeling of devotion and attitude if we sing them repeatedly in the same raga? The original versions available can hardly be counted on our fingers. Notations do not exist as they do for Tyagaraja *Keertanas*.

If we want to present them before the audiences in dance form, we have to set them to popular and pleasant ragas. If we can use ragas which listeners enjoy and appreciate, I feel that we have succeeded in our attempt. With this in view, I composed the Keertana, *Ponnalalo vege poddu poneeve* in raga Sahana and *'Aanabettuduvu neevu'* in raga Bhairavi. I released three cassettes of the Saint's Keertanas - *Annamacharya Keertanalu Annamayya Sringeradhara* and *'Pellipatalu'*. I composed the keertana *'Enta davvayinanem'* as a duet in Bhagesree. Sri Balamuralikrishna sang *'Tittitene pedavi tenekaarene'* in raga Khamas and *'Enta nerchukunnadi ee chinnadi'* in raga Sarasangi in his inimitable and melodious style. Smt. S. Janaki, Swapnasundari and I sang the Saint's keertanas recorded on these cassettes.

I feel a sense of great ecstasy whenever I compose music for the keertanas of Saint Annamacharya. I can have a sense of achievement only if I am able to create the same feeling of ecstasy in the listeners. Another experiment was to use folk styles for *padams* of Annamacharya. Every part of our country has its own folk style and I could use some of them successfully for *'ele ele maradala'*, *'chellagade nee maata'* and other *padams*. I feel that the folk style is eminently suitable for depicting the relationship of brother-in-law and sister-in-law and to portray rustic characters.

My daughter's help and co-operation in selecting the songs and setting them to music cannot be underestimated. Both my music

compositions and her choreography progress parallelly. I provide the tune as soon as she tells me the feeling she wants to convey. She checks the suitability of that tune for the dance and necessary modifications are carried out immediately. In this way the entire item with jatis is prepared and recorded. Later we replay the records and make further alterations if needed. By this process, my understanding of dance and my daughter's understanding of music have become deeper helping in our current compositions.

If Kuchipudi dance form has to be popularised it is necessary to select songs and dance dramas from various languages, set them to appropriate ragas and choreograph them in Kuchipudi style giving importance to the meaning and feeling. I can say with certainty that such compositions will be highly successful. Every item of Kuchipudi dance should be published with words and musical score (notations). The language should be clearly understood, inclusive of its nuances, meaning and style of expression, by the choreographer and music director. Every dancer should have a fair knowledge of music. If they undergo training in music, we can revive the forgotten tradition of dancer-singers or you may call them singer-dancers. Artists should strive to become one with the art. Only then can they communicate their feelings to the audiences and share the enjoyment with them.

(The original in Telugu translated by T. S. R. Murthy.)

- Courtesy : "Souvenir of Kuchipudi Mahotsav '96"



A Tribute

YEHUDI MENUHIN, THE PHENOMENON

(April 22, 1916 - March 12, 1999)

Fabulously popular both in the West and the East, renowned as one of the foremost violinists and musical crusaders of the world and one who had abiding love and faith in the culture of India, Yehudi Menuhin has entered the effulgent pages of the History of Art. Born at New York of Russian and Jewish parents, he was a British citizen since 1985, knighted in 1987 and made a Life Peer as Baron Menuhin of Stoke of Abernethy, Surrey in 1993. He was an internationalist in every respect. His interests were varied, fragrant and eminently humane and dharmic. He had a school in England, an academy in Switzerland, took personal interest on different disciplines, causes and movements touching environment, alternative medicine, education, yoga, refugee rehabilitation and many others. Cosmopolitan in outlook, he remained neutral in many contentious issues but took active part in others where others faltered! He was an ambassador of music, relief to the suffering, a messenger of peace and amity, of understanding and reconciliation. The notorious massacre of demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, China (which compares in a way with Jalianwalabagh massacre in the Punjab by the British in 1919) saw him cancelling in protest his visit to China in 1989. He worked for the freedom of Soviet dissidents and black natives of South Africa. His espousal of such cases was born of firm moral conviction.

How violin came to play such a distinguished part in his life carries a story of endearing love. (Now a small diversion. A priest in India entrusted the job of doing services in the temple one day to his young son. The good boy offered *neivedya* but God would not take it! The child got frightened as he feared that his father would scold him for cheating the Lord of His due. He cried and threatened the Almighty and taking pity, God appeared and took the proffered food. In a mood of pleasant achievement and accomplishment, the child went home innocently un-

ware of being subjected to beating for consuming the entire food himself even on the first occasion of such entrustment. Beating was followed by recap of what took place. The earnest repentant father lauded the greatness of his child. This is a story with a moral from Bharat). Now to young Menuhin. He had broken his toy violin as it would not sing! (It was not a case of Sambandar singing a song and Yashpanar not being able to bring it out on the harp or lute and in disgust trying to break it! (Vide Yet Another Garland) The crying baby got a real violin instead! And that settled the direction in which he was to go.

Training & Ascent

Menuhin had the opportunity of varied exposures and training. But the young prodigy enjoyed innate qualities of techniques, observation, assimilation and intuition. Fritz Kreister and Jacques Thibaud, both violinists, equipped him with artistry while young. At the tender age of seven, his lavish gifts and mastery came into evidence and he was virtually at the top. When he left off concerts in his seventies, he continued with teaching and conducting (which he commenced in 1957). He had watched San-Francisco Symphony. Had lessons with Signor Anker and Pesinger. With Romanian Georges Enescu and German Adolf Busch, he was under-study.

The debut on February 29, 1924 was a thriller. The audience was stunned by the brilliant mastery and control over the bow. The performance at Berlin was so rich and captivating that Albert Einstein followed him to the backstage, hugged him and made his famous remark.

"Now I know there is a God in Heaven".

The purity of his eloquent play, arduous practice and unparalleled passion for perfection saw him being idolized the world over. What he said long back is full of wisdom:

Violin made its own demands almost like a pagan goddess exacting a tribute.

We must preserve and restore all the values we hold in trust and every art which brings dignity, nobility and serenity to the human being.

Music is the bridge between the abstract and the tangible, between imagination and reality.

Practice

One sees sparks and identity of the spirit and wisdom of his views with those of Indian sages and seers. Verily the thought, action and speeches of the maestro have much in common with those of the East. In the history of vocalists and instrumentalists of India, how continuous and arduous training and practice have been stressed in the context of the *manodharmic* basis of our music is well known. Here is a feature which accords with that, yes, from the life of Menuhin;

I can remember travelling to Washington for the matinee concert....I would scrape away. (At that time, I had yet to discover the value of the mute). The rest of the passengers registered their annoyance, each coming in turn to knock furiously at the door (of the Pullman Car). I continued practising, but I was uncomfortably aware that when the time arrived, I should have to emerge to the malevolent glances of those who had been suffering my music..

'But since practice, I must, to mollify these antagonistic spirits, I played (at the end) with as much expression as I could muster, the Ave Maria. I was able to pass by now the beneficent glances of the powerful gentlemen who no longer wished to stone me!

One sees in this Menuhin's absolute faith and discipline in the matter of practice, his solicitude to the feelings of others and anxiety to mollify them and the knowledge of how to do it - an incident for management science indeed.

Incidents

Two incidents wherein the titan violinist of the West met two virtuosos of the East are worth a mention. Former Chief Justice of the High Court

of Judicature, Madras, P.V. Rajamannar secured the eminent violinist Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu from Visakhapatnam to hear the concert of Menuhin at the Museum Theatre (in which this author had played the role of the heroine in the drama *Samsara Bandham* - Tamil version of *Samsara Nauka* on October 8, 1944). On introduction, eminent Naidu expressed a wish to take a feel of the visitor's instrument. Menuhin declined but said that Naidu could 'see' it. Dwaram was visibly upset but kept his cool. Justice Rajamannar arranged a reception to Menuhin with a concert of Dwaram. The visiting maestro was so charmed and enchanted that taking the hands of Dwaram he told him:

Marvellous, Professor. Yesterday I did not allow you to touch my violin. Please forget that. Now let us go to my suite. You can examine my instrument as you like.

The majesty and purity of sound and the *manodharmic* magnificence of the music of the Sangita Kalanidhi enraptured and conquered the prodigy from the West so completely that he was gracious enough to admit and recognize the enormous eminence of his opposite. Dwaram took over the violin of the visitor and sent Menuhin lauding and applauding his music. It was a meet of two melodic souls from the two parts of the globe!

It was the occasion of the Edinburgh Festival, September 1965. Violin wizard and eminent composer, Lalgudi Jayaraman was there. On the invitation of Menuhin, he went to his house but without his violin as the purpose of the invitation was not known. Menuhin requested Jayaraman to play his violin. Sure Menuhin was drenched in the copious melodic classical rains that descended from the Italian violin in Indian hands. The music was so excellent and absorbing that the enslaved host was visibly happy. Jayaraman recalls the beauty and matchless timbre of Menuhin's violin play without mike.

Menuhin was punctilious about his finesse. His yoga teacher is P.K.S. Ayyangar, Pune to whom he presented a gold watch with the inscrip-

-tion 'To my yoga teacher'. Lalgudi Jayaraman states that during the intervals, he would be taking to yoga exercises unlike most others. 'I stand on my head every morning.' He conducted an orchestra while he was so and even conversed with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when both stood on their heads! Menuhin learnt yoga at Pune. **The lure of the East and its undying message were well received by the musical crusader of the West.** It is the capability and willingness of the artiste to understand, accept and absorb the best in other systems that help to bring out hidden virtues and values. Sir Edward Elgar hailed Menuhin as 'the perfect interpreter' of his concerts and 'the most wonderful artiste, I have ever heard'. Bela Bartok, famous Hungarian Composer, wrote his last celebrated Sonata for Menuhin.

The house of Menuhin was the home of Melody with many on piano, dance and the like. His violin play is the gayaka (vocal) style. His avarice to learn was proverbial and contagious. Here is what Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar says of him, full of praise:

It is a joy to see this superb musician (Menuhin) shedding all his pride and awareness of self and accepting like a child or like a devoted student my teaching and my music, though he is superior to me in age, experience and fame. After every rehearsal, he jumps up and embraces me. I can feel how much love he has for our music

He calls me his guru. I find in Yehudi the inherent quality of vinaya (humility and affability). Besides his fascination for our music, he is deeply interested in our philosophy and yoga.... He is the ideal model for students of music....

Yehudi Menuhin's tribute to the 'Indian quality of serenity' and the 'exalted personal expression of Union with the Infinite' needs special mention. Said he, 'If the Indian musician can help us to find this quality again, we shall have much to thank them for!' This is not a wish but a command that is to be fulfilled. He strived for it and had shown the path

Works: Unfinished Journey	1997
Six Lessons with Yehudi Menuhin	
Theme and Variations	1972

Awards: Coix de Lorraine from General de Gaulle)	Nehru Award
Gold Medal from Royal Philharmonic Society	
Knight of the British Empire	1968
Order of Merit	1987
Life peer	1993

The matchless cosmopolitan outlook the wizard possessed found practical follow-up and implementation and his noble views found their rhythm in his actions. It could be asserted that in him *Sangita* and *Sahitya* found their consanguinity and realised *adwaitic* integration.

'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

APPEAL

Four Volumes in the "GARLAND" series titled *A Garland, Another Garland, Yet Another Garland & The Fragrant Garland* are before the music-loving public. Readers of SHANMUKHA would have perused the gracious reviews of the books by the Editor. It is my desire to wind up the 'GARLAND' series of Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers, Musicians with the fifth and the last of the series. I shall be grateful if Vidwans and Vidushis of standing and musicologists help with full-bio-data, special comments, anecdotes and achievements and join the non-commercial *Yagna*. Those whose lives had been included already may peruse the contents in the four books & suggest additions worthy of being passed on to music - loving public & posterity

'GARLAND' Rajagopalan

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Music is Meditation

(Sheik Chinna Maulana's Nagaswaram continued to throb with strength he drew from his Sadhaka and the Parampara extending over nine generations. The strains of Nagaswaram stopped on the eve of Tamil New Year Day, this year which was otherwise a landmark in his musical career. One more Sangitha Kalanidhi shed his mortal coils in the Year he received the honour. We reproduce below a rare interview the maestro gave to the Editor and published in the "Indian Express" three years ago. SHANMUKHA January 1999 issue carries the maestro's presidential address at the Madras Music Academy Conference.)

At 70 PLUS, the ruling Sheikh of Nagaswaram, Sheik Chinna Maulana looks fragile, weak and talks mostly in whispers. But once he wields that exacting wind instrument, his power amazes you. As one possessed, he goes into the realm of melody, exploring its nuances and beauties on a vast canvas. So expansive is his Alapana, so deeper and longer his pauses (Kaarvai) that one witnesses in him agility of a youngster full of vigour and vitality. He draws his sustaining strength from his Sadhaka and the art from a Parampara extending over nine generations.

"It is 300 years of Parampara art," the maestro says with a sense of pride, in an informal meet during his concert visit recently. And traced the family tree extending over generations starting from Meera Saheb of Adipudi in Andhra Pradesh and coursing through Vallur Adam Saheb, Kommur Pintu Saheb and others, till it was handed down to him (8th generation) by his father Kasim Saheb of Karavadi. Commencing his training at the feet of his father at six and later under the elder Guru in the family Sheik Adam Saheb of Chilakaluripeta, Sheik Chinna Maulana travelled Southwards with an intention of enriching his style. And the Parampara art which was confined to Andhra Pradesh till his father's time shifted down south in 1960, to Srirangam, where he settled down and founded his own institution, "Saradha Nadaswara Sangeetha Ashram", training his disciples on Tanjavur Bani in Gurukula tradition.

From Andhra to Tanjavur Bani, the style of Chinna Maulana has come a long way moulding a lot of richness and repertoire in the temple tradition and concert Paddhati. He found the temple rituals and Sampradaya for Nagaswara artistes in Andhra Pradesh inadequate and found the same very specific and elaborate in Tamil Nadu. Keen to acquire the knowledge and style he moved to the South and learnt under Nachiarkoil Brothers - Rajan and Doraikannu - the famous "Tanjavur Bani."

"Alapana Prasthara is given prime importance in Sheik Saheb's style", says his proud grandson-disciple, Kasim, who plays second Nagawaram in concerts. Elaborating further, the maestro observes that Alapana Prastharas that weave through song-structure, for instance, between Pallavi and Anupallavi or Anupallavi and Charanam or even between Sarngathees (melodic variation) originated with that genius T. N. Rajaratnam Pillai and it has come to stay as Nagaswaram staple. To which Kasim added that Sheik has made an imprint of his own. True, the maestro's style specialises in playing around one note (Swara), giving free rein to his imagination, exploring all melodic possibilities with aesthetic modulations that involves much flexibility in blowing technique, breath control etc.

The maestro's enchanting Nagaswara melody at the lead of the night-long procession of the portraits of the 'Carnatic Trinity' (Saint Tyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Syama Sastri) along the four streets (Maada Veedi)

surrounding the Kamalalaya Theertham (Temple Tank) not long ago still lingers on in one's mind. It was a reverential Nandanjali to the Samvants on their Jayanti Day celebrations at their birthplace, Tiruvarur and sure testimony of his own stamina.

When enquired about such marathon performances, Sheik Saheb says "it is all the result of assiduous practice". Did it entail any special exercises, such as Yoga, meditation or Pranayama?

"Where is the necessity for Yoga or meditation? Our music itself is Yoga and concentration of any sort is as good as meditation. Once you start singing or playing, your concentration is on the music, the Raga, the Kriti or whatever you perform and where is the need for a separate session of meditation?

"A long pause," an elaborate sanchara, a buildup pinpointing a note gives you all the concentration that yogic skill or power can provide", the maestro observes. But emphatically added that one should cultivate the habit of serious listening "Listening sows the seeds of concentration and enhances one's grasping power. When the same is applied to Sadhaka, you gain mental poise, and polish in music. There is nothing to equal this 'meditation'. And all this is enshrined in the treasure of compositions, the Vaggeyakaras (composers) have bestowed on us" he concludes

Obituary

SHANMUKHA records its deep sense of sorrow on the recent demise of Sangeetha Vidushi Sulochana Nagarajan. A dedicated teacher, she had trained a number of students some of whom are themselves teachers.

"Listen, learn and practice ceaselessly", he says to his students in his ashram and insists on its implementation. His own grandsons Kasim and Babu have been trained and are continuing the tradition making it the 9th generation to do so.

Widely travelled and a participant in many prestigious national and international music festivals, as well as the Temple Festivals of the South, the maestro is the recipient of many awards and titles. But the two he cherishes most are Kanchi Paramacharya's blessings in 1985 when the Sheik made a command presentation of Dikshitar's Ananda Bhairavi Navavarnam before him and received a shawl which he constantly carries with him as a talisman; and the honour of Asthana Vidwan conferred by the Sringeri Acharya in 1993.

About the general decline in the art of Nagaswaram today the maestro has this to say: "Nagaswara music is preserved only by Parampara artistes. But it has to spread outside as well to flourish. Temple festivals and as a wedding ritual apart, Nagaswaram is usually featured as "Mangala Isai" at the inaugural functions of the Sabhas. The Sabha organisers rarely come forward to engage them for regular full-fledged concerts. How then can we expect the art to flourish?"

-Sulochana Rajendran

A Tribute

Buoyant Bannibai

"What have you come for? Oh! a T. V. interview. About my life? How I start and progress through my daily chores? ... Want me to start from what brand of toothpaste I use...., what soap or talc I patronise?" (laughs) and continues the humorous touch! Turning serious, she says "if you want to know about me come to my Harikatha and script your story."

That was the breath-taking Harikatha exponent Bannibai, a versatile artist, whose death recently at the age of 87 has almost orphaned the artform.

The Renaissance period of classical arts in India saw two women stalwarts emerge on the art scene of Harikatha - Saraswati Bai and Bannibai. Both stormed into the male-dominated field and created a niche for themselves.

Age had not withered Bannibai's humour nor custom staled her art presentation. Despite external vagaries - the gleaming silver hair and the stoop, the bulky-build Bannibai had an admirable charm and an enviable stage presence. She had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and untiring zest for presentation. She could spellbind her listeners, lay and literate with her eloquence and excellence. A multi-splendoured personality, she was versatile in music, dance, languages and had a flair for Katha enunciation. Besides languages, Idioms and proverbs came handy in her exposition. A worshipper of Saint Tyagaraja, she had learnt quite a number of his Kritis which helped highlight episodes with emotional essence. Bhajans of many saints swelled her repertoire. And for Abhinaya - her eloquent eyes spoke the whole essence of gesture language. She is once reported to have remarked that but for her physique (girth) she would have become a dancer.

Yes, she was born in a family steeped in music and dance. One among six girls and a boy, in an Andhra family Alamelu Manga Thayar (that was what Bannibai was christened) a fair chubby girl, shy and soft-spoken, and talented took to the family art as a fish to water. Her frequent visits to her Marvari 'Baniya' neighbour's house earned her the name 'Banni' and she became Bannibai, the ace performer.

Talent was not the only gift God had bestowed on her. Planned training and proper direction by teachers of eminence elevated the shy girl to a lofty 'Kathakar'.

Kuppayya Bhagavathar, Balu Pillai, Narayanaswamy Iyer taught her music - her repertoire was multifarious. Training in Tamil and English was imparted by Swaminatha Iyer. She learnt Marathi from Markandeya Brahmachari. Sanskrit, Hindi, Kannada followed. Mahadeva Iyer trained her in Abhinaya. And with the blessings of two great souls, one Bangalore Nagarathnammal, a great devotee of Saint Tyagaraja and the other art connoisseur Doraiswamy Naidu, Bannibai blossomed into a full-fledged Harikatha exponent. For, she was trained, we learn, even in the art of Harikatha by Kalyana Sastrigal, the son of the famous Panchapakesa Sastrigal and Vijaya Bhagavathar. That Bannibai propagated the Tanjavur style of Harikatha, in the "Nandanar Charithram", "Valli Tirumanam", goes without saying.

A staunch Rama Bhakta, she took the title of Kalaimamani, and the Sangeet Natak Akadami award in her stride. One who never boasted of her success, she was ever thankful to the Almighty for His Grace and her Gurus for their bounteous training in making her life meaningful.

- Kinnari

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MAY PROGRAMME

16TH MAY, 1999 - SUNDAY - 6.30 P. M.

SHRI T. V. SANKARANARAYANAN	-	VOCAL
SHRI V.V. RAVI	-	VIOLIN
SHRI MANNARGUDI EASWARAN	-	MRIDANGAM
SHRI H. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN (Bangalore)	-	GHATAM

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Ground Floor 'F' to 'O' Rows	Rs. 100/-	'P' to 'EE' Rows	Rs. 50/-
I Balcony	Rs. 30/-	II Balcony	Rs. 20/-

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 PLEASE DON'T BRING Eatables, TRANSISTORS, MOBILE PHONES AND PAGERS INTO THE HALL. THESE MUST STRICTLY BE OBSERVED.

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMMES

13th June, 1999 - Sunday - 6.00 p. m.
 Dance Drama "ABHIJNANA SHAKUNTALAM"
 PRESENTED BY

Smt. JAYASHREE RAJAGOPALAN & PARTY of Nrithyodaya, Mumbai

10th July, 1999 - Saturday - 6.00 p. m.
 HYDERABAD BROTHERS & PARTY
 (Shri Seshachari & Shri Ragavachari)

8th August, 1999 - Sunday - 6.00 p. m.
 An evening with
 Violin Vidushis B. RANJANI & B. GAYATRI in Vocal Recital

11th September, 1999 - Saturday - 6.00 p. m.
 Shri Trissur V. RAMACHANDRAN & PARTY - Vocal Recital

VENUE FOR ALL PROGRAMMES : SHANMUKHANANDA HALL

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This is to bring to the notice of the Members that Membership subscription to the Sabha should be paid in advance as per Rules & Regulations of the Sabha

As such, such of those Members, who have not paid the subscription for the current year, i.e. 1st April 1999 to 31st March 2000 so far, are requested to pay the subscription at the Sabha's Office immediately against delivery of the new Membership cards.

NEW MEMBERSHIP ADMISSIONS

In deference to the pressing demand from Art Lovers, we have decided to entertain a limited number of Membership Admission. Membership forms can be had from the Sabha's Office during Office hours - 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on working days and submit the same to the Hon. Secretaries along with payment.

S. Seshadri - V. Rangaraj
 Hon. Secretaries

1st May, 1999

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It includes a special variety marking the National integration on the World Music Day and Gandhi Jayanthi and also a crowning finale.

Among the attractions are the Saxophone duet (double Saxophone) with Thavil - Mridangam accompaniment three Veena solos (a sure boost of sustenance for the Divine instrument) besides a number of vocal talents. It is gratifying that Sabha's venture started in 1991 as a monsoon session to bringing to fore talents of promise has paid rich dividends and has become a permanent feature. In the near-decade exploration many an young aspirant brought to limelight has had a steady rise to stardom in the concert arena.. Wishing them all further ascent and accolades, Shanmukhananda pursues in its service to Sangeetha and promotion of talents.

Venue : Jasubhai Convention Hall, Shanmukhananda Tower Complex

PROGRAMME (d.v.)

5-6-1999

Saturday

6.00 p.m.

INAUGURATION OF THE FESTIVAL

Shri A.S. Vedamurthy (Mumbai)
 (Vidwan in both Nagaswaram & Saxophone)
 and Shri T.S. Manjunathan
 Shri K. Selvarathinam
 Shri Vivek Rajagopal (Mumbai)

- Saxophone
 - Duet
 - Thavil
 - Mridangam

6-6-1999

Sunday

A) 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.

B) 7.35 to 9.00 p.m.

Kum. Smitha Madhav & Party (Hyderabad)
 (Disciple of Shri V. Balasubramanian &
 Smt. Sundari Janakiraman, Hyderabad)

Ms. Manjari (Chennai)
 (Hailing from Saint Thyagaraja's Sishya Parampara
 Ms. Manjari is the disciple of Smt Kalpagam Swaminathan)

- Vocal
 - Veena

19-6-1999

Saturday

a) 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.

b) 7.35 to 9.00 p.m.

Smt. Kasi Visalakshi (Bangalore)
 (Disciple of Shri Mysore V. Doreswamy Iyengar)
 Shri Narayanamurthy (Bangalore)
 Shri R. Chandrashekar (Mumbai)
 Kum. G. Subhalakshmi & Party (Mumbai)
 (Disciple of Smt. Meera Nathan, Mumbai)

- Veena
 - Mndangam
 - Ghatam
 - Vocal

20-6-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Charulata Mani (Chennai) (Disciple of Shri Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao & Calcutta K.S. Krishnamurthy) Smt. Jayanthi Kesav (Chennai) Shri Ashwin K. Sridharan Shri B. Ravi	- - - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Ghatam Vocal
17-7-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Savita Narasimhan (Chennai) (Initially trained by Shri O.V. Subramaniam & currently being trained by Chitraveena Ravikiran) Shri V. Balakrishnan (Mumbai) Shri Rajesh Srinivasan (Mumbai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
18-7-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Shri Umamaheswaran (Mumbai) (Disciple of Smt. T.R. Balamani, a seasoned Guru of Mumbai) Shri Anand Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri Prasad Maniappan (Mumbai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
24-7-1999 Saturday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Master Easwar Ramakrishnan (Trivandrum) (Son and disciple of Shri P.P. Ramakrishnan) Shri P. P. Ramakrishnan Shri G. S. Rajesh Nath (Trivandrum)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Smt. Subhalakshmi Murali (Mumbai) (An M.A., M. Phil in Music, Smt. Subhalakshmi is currently trained by Mrs. Subhalakshmi Swaminathan, Mumbai)	-	Vocal
25-7-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. Gayatri Sankar (Chennai) (Visually handicapped artiste, Ms. Gayatri is the disciple of Shri M.D. Ramanathan and Shri Puducode Krishnamurthy) Ms. Padma Sankar (Chennai) Madipakkam Shri Suresh (Chennai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
1-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. Hema Hariharan (Mumbai) (Disciple of Bangalore Smt. Vijayalakshmi & Mumbai N.S. Chandrashekara Bhagavathar) Shri Nilesh Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri S. Shankaranarayanan (Mumbai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
14-8-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. P.V. Geetha (Chennai) (Disciple of Shri Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavathar) Shri S.V. Ramachandran (Mumbai) Master Vijay Natesan (Mumbai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal

15-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Chitrambari Krishnakumar (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. Charumati Ramachandran) Shri Melakkaveri Thyagarajan (Chennai) Shri Hanumanthapuram Bhoovaragan (Chennai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
21-8-1999 Saturday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Ms. N. Vijayalakshmi (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan) Shri R. Ganesan (Mumbai)	- - -	Veena Mridangam Flute
b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Master C. Chaitanyakumar & Party (Bangalore) (Disciple of Shri L.V. Mukund & Dr. N. Ramani)	-	Flute
22-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Radha Parthasarathy (Chennai) (Disciple of Shri P.S. Narayanaswamy) Ms. Jayanthi Kesav (Chennai) Shri K.V. Gopalakrishnan (Chennai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
4-9-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Shri Vaikom T. V. Jayachandran & Party (Vaikom) (Disciple of Shri T. M. Thyagarajan & Shri R. Venkataraman of Trivandram)	-	Vocal
5-9-1999 Sunday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Master A. Rohit (Chennai) & Party (Disciple of Shri B.A. Chidambaranathan, Chennai)	-	Vocal
b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Master Srivatsan Sundara Rajan (Mumbai) (Disciple of Shri P.N. Krishnamurthy of B.A.R.C.) Shri Anand Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri A. K. Gopalakrishnan (Mumbai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Vocal
13-9-1999 Monday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Oppiliappan Koil Shri N. Venkatesa Prasad (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. T. R. Navaneetham of Kumbakonam) Ms. Ranjani Ramakrishnan (Mumbai) Shri K. Kumar (Mumbai)	- - - -	Flute Violin Mridangam Vocal
2-10-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	World Music Day - Mahatma Gandhi Jayanthi Programme to be announced	-	Vocal Music
3-10-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Special Programme to mark the Finale of Ninth Talent Promotion Festival - Vocal Music by Dr. Lakshmi Podhuval & Party (Madurai) (A disciple of Shri T. M. Thyagarajan)	-	Vocal Music

S. SESHADRI
V. RANGARAJ
Hon. Secretaries

....Down Memory Lane

It was a concert when the audience struck a rapport with the artiste, reminiscing the good old days when grandfather "Sangeetha Bhoopati" Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer spellbound them with his inimitable Arabhi, Darbar, Khamas etc., and then father Santhanam strode supreme, faithfully toeing the elder maestro's line but with a difference, adding his own 'whispering' sallies to a stentorian voice. Going down memory lane Rasikas at Shanmukhananda Hall on that February evening (13th) enjoyed Maharajapuram Ramachandran's concert organised by the Sabha.

Listening to Ramachandran after some years one felt that he has been working hard to be worthy of the legacy he has inherited and do justice to the trust invested in him. He has cultivated his voice to 'resemble' his father's - in volume, in melody etc, Brikkas - frescoes to some extent, but clarity of Sahitya, at times good, often not to father's standard.

One thing was very clear that he was trying to be his master's voice. It could pay him dividends for some years to earn a name and find a firm footing on professional front. However to sustain in concert circuit in the long run he would do well to mould it to his own imagination and originality. He has melodic fluency and power of voice. With some modulation (not whispering nuances) he could be on his own.

Granting that imitation of father's musical culture was appreciated that evening, his repertoire had aesthetic sensitivity and articulate finesse. Opening with Charukesi Varnam, he set the tone and tenor of a delightful concert. Sadasivan Maindane Gajamukhane in Hamsadhwani was impressive with the Swaraprastharas to Charana, Karthikeyanin....., the whole segment in Madhyamakala.

The choice of evocative Ragas such as Ganamurthi and Kalyanavasantham was commendable. In an effort to melodise Sangathees care should have been taken about clear diction of the beautiful Sahitya of Ganamurthe. The team of accompanists, M.A. Sundaresan (Violin), veteran Vellore Ramabhadran (Mridangam) and V. Nagarajan (Kanjira) played with great inspiration and added to the melodic sustenance of the Kriti. Sri Venkatesam Bhajami (Kalyanavasantham) was a new found offer.

Arabhi, the Sangati-studded Tsalakalla was true to the Maharajapuram Bani. Only the Niraval appeared as an exercise with the pace accelerated midway. Kalyani Alapana following the favourite Ragamalika of his father, Sarangan Murugane, set one down memory lane. Enduko Nee Manasu with full fledged Niraval and long-winding swaras got on well. Yet the spontaneous Thani by percussive pair stole the thunder.

Quite a number of father's favourites found a place in the concert much to the delight of the Bani fans and he sang them with his heart and soul.

The April concert of Madurai T. N. Seshagopalan presented on April 10, by the Sabha, was dedicated to the memory of Musiri Subrmanya Iyer on his birth centenary (April 9). On the occasion a portrait of the great master-musician, donated by his disciple Shri C. V. Narasimhan, I.C.S. (Retd.), former Under Secretary General of United Nations, was unveiled by Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna.

Not only was the concert dedicated to Musiri. The style also emulated the maestro's Vilambam, and other characteristic features. How far could Seshagopalan succeed?

He started well in the Vilambam, the feel of the Sahitya expressed tier by tier in Meru Samana Dheera (Mayamalavagowla). In the very opening number he tried his hand at Niraval in Musiri Bani, about which he spoke. M. Chandrasekharan (Violin) responded well. His swaras had greater fluency.

Perhaps voice discrepancy owing to soar throat(?) impaired his efforts at the slow pace. He had to resort to technicalities now and then. Why did he impose Gamak-taan sallies on Purvi Kalyani? The Sangathees needed no glamour. And where a Niraval was most appropriate on the Kriti Ninnuvinagamari he chose to waive and proceed with Kalpana Swaras.

While speaking about Musiri's Mukhari the Vocalist hailed the master's unique way of bringing out its essence in one word Kanulara in the Kriti Enta Nine Vamintunu Sabari Bhagyamu. However, in rendition his efforts were sincere but results were not pleasing. The great 'master' remained elusive. Elongated pause and heavy deflection could not capture the magic. Chandrasekharan however captured what TNS missed.

In fact, it was Chandrasekharan's day. His tone was soothing. His pace sustaining. Whether the jet-set Bantureeti (Hamsanadam) with darting of Ati Drut swaras or slow-paced Sankarabharanam in its traditional grandeur, Chandrasekharan played with great restraint and stole the show. Seshagopalan had to tide over voice trouble with gimmicks. And Swararaga sudharasa deprived of Niraval?

One could not criticise him for the liberal dose of Swaraprastharas with rhythmic intricacies. He is an adept at it. But in a concert dedicated to a maestro who was a master of Niraval, eliminating that Manodharma facet in major numbers was disappointing.

He was not very 'Soukhyia' with Inta Saukhyamanine (Kapi) when he missed Laya in the stance Swara Raga Laya Sudharasamandu!!

Hangover of Sankarabharana Swara Raga Sudharasa? Kabir's Bhajan too had slips.

Percussion pair K.V. Prasad (Mridangam) and V. Suresh (Ghatam) along with Chandrasekhar gave a solid inspiring support and their Thani was an excellent phase.

All roads led to Shanmukhananda Hall on March 31 when Ustad Vilayat Khan was featured in a Sitar recital. Khan Saheb's recitals have been few and far between these days and it was quite long for Rasikas of this part of the metropolis to have had an opportunity to listen to the Ustad.

The occasion was the inauguration of the Convention Hall of the Sabha at the Tower Block and Medical Centre named after the great philanthropist Shri Jasubhai Shah (whose Foundation has adopted the two wings of the Shanmukhananda). The inauguration was at the hands of Bharat Ratna Shri C. Subramaniam. And the memorable recital was by Ustad Vilayat Khan.

Ustad Vilayat Khan is a master strokesman. Rightly feeling the pulse of the audience and mood of the occasion - one of dedication, he chose to go placid and twanged the heart strings of the audience. The Raga of the evening was Piloo in its varied hues. It was Piloo, Mishra Piloo in two sessions and poignance reigned throughout. The Alap in Vilambit with effective pauses conveyed the mood of the master well and the Gat Vilambit was brief but chiselled. The Alap lasted longer than Gat well over half-an-hour. For Taans he employed tonal modulations. And his Taan patterns had a flavour of their own. His 'Mishra' phrasings were stylistically employed enhancing the aesthetic flavour of the melody.

There seemed to be good understanding between Khan Saheb and Tabla Sabir Khan. After every intricate Taan sequence the Ustad gave a solo chance to Sabir Khan to show his rhythmic prowess, and letting Laykari dominate. If at all he contributed, he played very soft,

almost whispering melody. In his turn Sabir Khan gave soft Sangat as if caressing the Tabla to help melody reign. In the bargain the nuances however subdued came off clear and eloquent from Sitar and the Layakari in soft strokes did elevate the quality of the performance.

A good experience it was in performing Paddhati.

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While the Vaggeyakara days of Syama Sastri and Papanasam Sivan were marked with Sangeethanjali by students past and present of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya and artists of experience and teen-aged prize winners in various competitions, the Hindustani segment of Savants Day of Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was celebrated by Dr. Vandana Kattis vocal recital.

In Syama Sastri's Anjali concerts, his all time - greats - *Mariveragati* (Ananda Bhairavi), *Sarajadalanetri* (Sankarabharanam) figured in a majority of sessions, each giving the audience a taste of the Pantaathara and the Paddhati. It is common knowledge that Ananda Bhairavi is a very ancient Raga, originally of folk music but has come a long way occupying a unique status in classical idiom. Its evolution over the centuries has been one of great interest to musicians and researchers. It has a valued place in wedding ceremonies, in Bhajana tradition and Utsava Sampradaya Keertanas. Its therapeutic potentialities have been proved by musicians of this century. This Raga had attained its unique quality in the Trinity's hands especially Muthuswamy Dikshitar, and Syama Sastri. Tyagaraja's abandoning of composing in this Raga after the only one he did, *Neeke Teliyaka Pote*, is well known to need reiteration.

In its evolution the Raga acquired or rather retained its Bhashanga character in many forms of composition. But in highly aesthetised and classicalised Kritis, especially of Trinity, it drew its uniqueness more from its Upanga character

than Bhashanga nuances.-eg., Syama Sastri's *O, Jagadamba, Mariveragathi* and Dikshitar's *Tyagaraja Yoga Vaibhavam, Kamalamba Samrakshatumam*. Modern Pataantharas, however, have the Bhashanga nuances neatly employed. When did this happen is a matter for research. But one felt that at least in the Kritis gems adhering to Upanga tenets would be ideal.

The other Kritis featured were *Ninnuvinagamari* (Purviksalyani) in a rare Viloma Chapu Tala, *Nannubrova Lalitha* (Lalitha) again known for its off-beat take off in Viloma Chapu, *Tarunam Eedamma* (Gowlipanthu), *Sankeri Sankuru* and *Durusuga* both in Saveri, *Trilokamatha* (Pharaz), *Mayamma* (Natakurinji), *Himatrisute* (Kalyani), *Kanaka Saila Viharini* (Punnagavarali) and *Ninnuvina Marigalada* (Ritigowla).

It was a pity none chose to render the Swarajatis, the magnificent gems of architectural grandeur.

The participants Anand Viswanathan (Violin solo) Subhalakshmi Murali, Lavanya Mahadevan from the younger generation showed innate talent and good grooming. Sulochana Thyagarajan and Gowri Nagarajan upheld the Anjali spirit and performed with understanding.

It was more or less youngster's day - the Papanasam Sivan anjali. The simplicity and spontaneity of Papanasam Sivan's compositions and the Gana Rasa flowing sweet and silken from them have earned him the name 'Tamil Tyagaraja' and that was quite evident from the youngsters' renditions. They were quite at home with the Madhyama Kala flow and the language.

Priyadarshini Narasimhan, Kavitha Jayaraman, Sarita Sunder, Lavanya Kailas, Savitha Viswanathan, S. Priya and Srividya Shriram have all been familiar names in the annals of Shanmukhananda competitions and these prize-winners performed to the delight of the audience, making their teachers proud.

Among the rare compositions sung in the concerts were *Nee Arulvai* (Keeravani), *Sivaya Namvenru* (Kuntalavarali), *Sankara Dayakara* (Harikambhoji), *Gatiyudava* (Ragamalika) and *Ranganal Tudipporku* (Chakravakam). The rest were familiar delights such as *Sri Ganesha* (Tilang), *Muladhara Murthi* (Hamsadhvani), *Mayil Vahana* (Mohana) *Unnaiyallal* (Kalyani), *Karpakambike* (Bilahari), *Saravana Bhava Guhane* in Kannada and *Madhyamavati, Tanigai Valar* (Todi), *Kaa Vaa Vaa* (Varali) etc.

Dr. Vandana Katti belongs to Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana and has had her grooming under Manik Bhide and Kishori Amonkar. Naturally her music highlights the grandeur of the Gharana. Bestowed with a powerful voice she has a flair for exploration and an evocatively meandering style of enunciation.

Her opening *Madhuvanti* had revealed these characteristics. Her moves followed a methodic perception making Raga unfoldment placid and poignant. Her gradual build up on the *Madhya Saptak* and her reach of *Tara Shadja* was quiet impressive. There was an emphasis on *Varja* *proyogas* adding to the quietitude in her style and poignance in enunciation.

There is, of course, a nasal tinge that adds a new dimension to her voice, though at times, especially in the higher forays it slightly jars. *Gamak Taans* she employed would have more suited a voice with soft-silken touch. The nasal twang was a bit too heavy to carry the *Gamaks* in the *Taans*.

After *Vilambit*, the *Madhya Laya Khayal* had *Madhyam* as *Nyasa* and the shift to *Drut* was made in *Akaar Taans*. The *Khayal* was wound up with *Drut Tarana*. The *Taan* improvisations in *Drut* was sprightly as it should be and her vocal manoeuvring here was excellent.

The voice that had gained in power and pliance through the concert had reached a pliant peak, and her *Meera Bhajan* came off pouring poignance in eloquent modulation.

In spirit and tone it was a true Anjali to the Savants who streamlined the study and Sadhna of Hindustani Music.

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It is of great pride to note that Vijay Natesan, the whiz-kid student of master percussionist T. S. Nandakumar of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya has bagged the first prize for Mridangam in the All India Radio Competitions. Over the years the child-artiste has been progressing steadily and under the disciplined grooming of the Guru has blossomed into a seasoned Mridangist. SHANMUKHA congratulates him and wishes many more laurels in the years to come.

- KINNARI

SWATI TIRUNAL MUSIC FESTIVAL IN MUMBAI

KELI, a Mumbai-based organisation that aims at propagating the traditional as well as classical art forms of Kerala, organised a 3-day Music Festival on February 16, 17 and 18, 1999, exclusively devoted to Maharaja Swati Tirunal's compositions. Befittingly, it was inaugurated by the doyen of Karnatak musicians, Sangita Kalandidhi Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, by lighting the traditional lamp.

As a token of its reverential appreciation of the immense contributions made by Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer towards restoring, preserving and popularising the musical legacy of the Maharaja, Keli honoured him with a "Veera Shrunghala" (a golden bracelet the rulers of Kerala gave to Grand masters of Art & Literature). The 'Veera Shrunghala' was presented to him by the celebrated Hindustani vocalist, Ganasaraswati Kishori Amonkar. The maestro regaled the audience with two compositions.

- S. S.

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)

Music Competition - 1998 -99 List of Prize Winners

S.No	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
VOCAL		
1.	Shri B.V.S. Iyengar Memorial (Instituted by M/s. Iyengar & Co.) (Age 10-15 Years)	I. Kum. K. Lavanya II. Kum. Savita V. III. Master Yogesh Padmanabhan
2.	Smt. Dharmambal Subramania Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Pasupathy) (Vamams only - Age - 10-12 years)	I. Kum. Prathima Bhat II. Kum. Priyanka Iyer III. Kum. R. S. Smrithi Consolation : Master R. Ram Subramanian
3.	(I) Smt. Vijayalakshmi Nathan Endowment (Instituted by Shri R. S. Nathan) (II) Smt. N. Lakshmi Endowment (Instituted by Smt. N. Lakshmi)	I. Shri N. D. Vijaya Kumar II. Kum. G. Subhalakshmi III. Kum. R. Sheela
4.	(I) Kalki Memorial (Instituted by Shri T. Sadasivam) (II) Narayani Haridasan Memorial (Instituted by Shri H. Shankar) (For Bharatiyar Songs)	I. Kum. Vasanthi Kannan II. Kum. Apama Sundaresan III. Kum. Sruthi Subramanian
5.	Shri R. V. Murthy Endowment (Instituted by Shri R. V. Murthy) Kum. Sharada Krishnan Memorial (Instituted by Shri K. S. Krishnan) (For Purandaradasa Devanamas)	I. Kum. Shilpa Krishnaswamy II. Smt. Subhalakshmi Murali & Shri N.D. Vijaykumar III. Kum. Ramya Sundaresan
6.	Smt. D. K. Pattammal Endowment (Instituted by Dr. V.V. Srivatsa) (For Pancharatna Kritis)	Appreciation I Kum. Shilpa Krishnaswamy Appreciation - II Smt. Subhalakshmi Murali
8.	I. Shri S. R. Kasturi Endowment (Instituted by Shri S. R. Kasturi) II. Shri E. R. Krishnaswamy Memorial (Instituted by Shri S.K. Iyengar) III. Shri Maharajapuram Santhanam Endowment (Instituted by Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust) (For Tyagaraja Kritis)	Appreciation Prize : Kum. Vaishnavi Rajagopalan
9.	G. Kandaswamy Memorial (Instituted by Shri S. Raman) (For Koteeswara Iyer Composition);	Appreciation Prize : Smt. Srividya Sriram
10.	Karuganti Sathyavathi Memorial (Instituted by Shri Hanumantha Rao)	I. Shri N. D. Vijay Kumar II. Kum. Vaishnavi Rajagopalan
11.	Smt. D. K. Pattammal Endowment (Instituted by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa) (for Muthiah Bhagavathar Kritis)	I. Smt. Subhalakshmi Murali II. Kum. Ramya Sundaresan III. Kum. Priya S.
VIOLIN		
12.	I. Smt. Lakshmi Ammal Memorial (Instituted by G. Sundaresan) II. Smt. Mangalam Govindaswamy Endowment (Instituted by Shri T. S. Krishnaswami) III. Smt. Lalitha Bhat Endowment (Group I - Age 10 - 15 Years) (Instituted by Dr. Bhat)	I. Kum. R. S. Smrithi II. Master Anujan K. Moorthy
VEENA & VIOLIN		
13.	I. Smt. Dharmambal Subramanian Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Pasupathy) II. Mullaisaval Natarajan Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Lakshmi Natarajan) (Vamams only Age 10 - 12 Years)	I. Master Yogesh Padmanabhan II. Kum. R. S. Smrithi III. Master Anujan K. Moorthy
MRIDANGAM		
14.	Shri Vellore Ramabhadran Endowment (Instituted by Vellore Ramabhadran) Group I - Age 9-13 Years) T. S. N. Percussive Arts Centre's Endowment (Instituted by Shri T. S. Nandakumar) For Group II Age : 13 - 18 Years	Appreciation Prize: Master Varun Narayanan Appreciation Prize : Master Varun

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)
Sangeetha Vidyalaya - Scholarship Award 1998-99

S.No	Title of Endowment / Memorial Scholarship	Name of the Awardees	Name of Teacher
VOCAL			
1.	Suryasekhara Iyer Memorial (Instituted by Shri P.S. Seetharaman)	Smt. Savithri N. Sastri	Smt. Kalyani Sharma
2.	Muthukrishnan Yathindra Memorial (Instituted by Shri Seerkazhi Sundaresan)	Shri Greenivasan Mahadevan	Smt. Kalyani Sharma
3.	Shri S. K. Patil Memorial (Instituted by the Sabha)	Shri Greenivasan Mahadevan	Smt. Kalyani Sharma
4.	Shri Jayaram Mani Endowment (Instituted by Shri Jayaram Mani)	Smt. Sameer Subramanian	Smt. Prema Krishnan
5.	Smt. Lakshmi Easwar Memorial (Instituted by Shri T. N. P. Easwar)	Kum. R. S. Emriti	Smt. R. Sakuntala
6.	Smt. Kalyani Sharma Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Kalyani Sharma)	Kum. Nair Sindhu	Smt. Radha Santhanam
7.	Radhika Ganapathi Endowment	Kum. Deepthi M.	Smt. Prema Krishnan
8.	Trichy Swaminatha Iyer Endowment (Instituted by Trichi Swaminatha Iyer)	Master Vijayanarain Rangaraj	Smt. Prema Krishnan
9.	Kambangudi Kamalamba Venkatarama Iyer Memorial (Instituted by Shri V. Athmanatha Iyer)		
VEENA			
10.	Ms. Hemamalini Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Jaya Chakravarthy)	Shri S. Vaidyanathan	Smt. Kalyani Sharma
11.	Veenai Suguna Endowment (Instituted by Subhashni Girdhar)	Kum. C. Preethi	Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy
12.	Smt. Kalyani Sharma Endowment (Instituted by Smt. Kalyani Sharma)	Smt. Jayalakshmi Arun	Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy
13.	Shri Vaikoma Krishna Iyer Memorial (Instituted by Shri K. Sivaramakrishnan)	Kum. K. Uma	Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy
14.	Smt. Lalitha Gurunadham Memorial (Instituted by Smt. Kamala Vivekanandam)	Kum. Bhavika	Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy
VIOLIN			
15.	Shri V. Sridhar Memorial (Instituted by Shri G. R. Rao)	Master L. Ramakrishnan	Smt. Visalam Vageeswar
16.	Shri Jayaram Mani Endowment (Instituted by Shri Jayaram Mani)	Master S. Sudarshan	Smt. Visalam Vageeswar
17.	Smt. Lakshmi Easwar Memorial (Instituted by Shri T. N. P. Easwar)	Kum. M. S. Smriti	Smt. Visalam Vageeswar
18.	Lakshmi Narasimha Charitable Trust Endowment (Instituted by the Trust)	Kum. Lalitha R. Raj Kum. Srividya K.M.	Smt. Visalam Vageeswar
MRIDANGAM			
19.	Shri Jayaram Mani Endowment (Instituted by Shri Jayaram Mani)	Shri R. Krishna Kumar	Shri T. S. Nandakumar
20.	Dena Bank Krishnaswamy Memorial (Instituted by Shri K. Ramaswamy)	Master Devanand Menon	Smt. Jayalakshmi Gopalakrishnan
SITAR			
21.	Smt. Vijayalakshmi Kasturi Memorial (Instituted by Shri S. R. Kasturi)	Kum. Neena Joshi & Smt. Hansa Dasani	Pt. Kartic Kumar
TABLA			
22.	Shri Jayaram Mani Endowment (Instituted by Shri Jayaram Mani)	Shri Niranjana Singh	Shri Milind V. Joshi

காலமும் கலைஞரும்

By நாடகக் காவலர் ஆர். எஸ். மனோகர்

கலை என்பது காலத்தால் வளர்ந்தது, கற்றவர்களின் கற்பனையால் மெருகிடப்பட்டது. அப்படி மனிதர்களால் உண்டாக்கப்பட்ட கலையே, பின்பு அந்த காலத்தையும், மனிதனையும் படம் பிடித்துக் காட்ட அற்புத சாதனமாகவும் அமைந்தது!

கலை புராணத்திலிருந்து தொடங்கி, சரித்திர காலத்திற்கு வந்து, இன்று சமூக நிகழ்ச்சிகளைத் தன்னோடு பின்னிப் பிணைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

எந்த ஒரு நாட்டின் நாடகங்களையும், இலக்கியங்களையும், பழமையிலிருந்து இன்றுவரை நாம் எடுத்துக்கொண்டு பார்ப்போமானால், அவைகளை கலாசாரமும், பண்பும், எங்கிருந்து தொடங்கி, எங்கு மையம் கொண்டு இப்பொழுது எங்கு வந்திருக்கிறது என்பதை நாம் அறிய முடியும்.

இந்த வகை ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு, இலக்கியம் கூட சற்று ஒதுங்கியவைகளாக இருக்கலாம். ஆனால் கலை வடிவான நாடகங்கள் நிச்சயமாக ஒதுங்கி இருக்க முடியாது என்பது என் ஆணித்தரமான கருத்து.

காரணம் : அந்த நாடகங்கள் எழுதப்பட்ட காலத்தில் இல்லாத நிகழ்ச்சிகளாக அமைக்கப்பட்டிருந்தாலும் நடத்தப்படும்பொழுது பார்க்கும் மக்களின் பழக்க வழக்கங்களோடு ஒட்டித்தான் அவைகள் நடத்தப்பட வேண்டும். அதனால்தான் கலையை எந்த காலத்திலும் மனிதன் தன்னினத்தானே திருப்பிப்பார்த்துக் கொள்ளும் கண்ணாடி என்று கூறுவார்கள் அறிஞர்கள்!

அத்தகைய கலை நம் நாட்டில் வடக்கிலிருந்து தெற்கு வரை எப்படி வளர்ந்தது என்ற ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு வருவோமானால், மேற்சொன்ன கலை வளர்ந்த முறையும் இங்கு பொருந்தும் என்பதை நாம் கண்கூடாகக் காணலாம். அதில் ஒரு அரிய உண்மையும் தேங்கிக்கிடக்கிறது.

இன்று மனிதன் தன்னைச் சுற்றியிருக்கும் சமூக நிகழ்ச்சிகள் தான் கலையில் இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று நினைப்பதைப் போல் அன்று வாழ்ந்த மக்கள் நினைக்கவில்லை. அல்லது அன்று எழுதிய நாடக ஆசிரியர்கள் அப்படி எழுதவில்லை. காரணம், அன்று வாழ்ந்த அந்த மக்களும் ஆசிரியர்களும் நிகழ் காலந்தான் நம்மோடு ஒட்டியது, வருங்காலம் நம்மால் படைக்கப்படுவது, முற்காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்த மக்கள் எப்படி வாழ்ந்தார்கள், என்னென்ன தர்ம நீதிகளைக் கடைபிடித்தார்கள் என்னென்ன அரிய சாதனைகளை செய்துக் காட்டினார்கள் அவைகளில் போற்ற வேண்டியவை எவை, விலக்க வேண்டியவை எவை என்பவைகளையெல்லாம் அறிய ஆசைப்பட்டார்கள். அதனால்தான் முற்காலத்தில் சரித்திர, புராண நாடகங்களே அதிகமாக இருந்தன.

சற்றேறக்குறைய 50 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பு வரை அதுதான் நிலை. பின்பு மக்களின் அறிவு வளர வளர படித்தவர்களும், வெளிநாடு சென்றவர்களும் நாடகக் கலையில் ஆர்வம் காட்டத் துவங்கினர்.

இடையே புராண நாடகங்களும் இருந்தன. அவைகளையும் மக்கள் பக்திக்காகவும் பொழுது போக்கிற்காகவுமே கண்டு களித்தார்கள். அந்த நாடகங்களில் பெரும்பாலும் வசனங்கள், பாடல்களும், விருத்தங்களாகவுமே அமைக்கப்பட்டிருந்தன. புரிகிறதோ இல்லையோ, மக்கள் அவைகளைத்தான் சொல்லுகிறார்கள் என்று யூகித்து ரசித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தனர். சற்றேறக்குறைய நூற்பது ஐம்பது வருடங்களுக்கு முன்புதான் இன்றிருக்கும் மேடை முறைகள் தோன்றி நாடகங்களுக்கு மெருகளிக்க ஆரம்பித்தன.

ஆனால் அப்பொழுதும் விருத்தங்களும் பாடல்களும் நாடகத்தை விட்டுவிட்டுப் போய்விடவில்லை. தமிழகத்தைப் பொறுத்தவரை அந்த முறையை மாற்றியமைத்து, வசனங்களுக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் கொடுத்து பாடல்களை மாற்றியமைத்தவர் தவத்திரு ஸ்ரீ சங்கரதாஸ் ஸ்வாமிகளேயாவார்.

அவரையொட்டி நாடகக் கலையை வளர்க்க வந்த அறிஞர்களான ஈகை சிவசங்கரன் பிள்ளை, பரிதிமாற் கலைஞரான சூரிய நாராயண சாஸ்திரி, சிறந்த வழக்கறிஞரான வி.சி. கோபால ரத்னம், நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் பம்மல் சம்பந்த முதலியார் முதலிய அறிஞர் பெருமக்கள் மேலும் நாடகக் கலையை சீர்திருத்தி நாகரீகமாக்கினார்கள். ஆனால் அப்பொழுதும் சரித்திர புராணங்களிலிருந்து நாடகக் கலையை முழுமையாக வெளிக் கொணர் அவர்களாலும் முடியவில்லை.

அரசன் நாடகத்தில் விஷம் குடித்து இறப்பதாக ஒரு காட்சி வந்தால், விஷம் குடித்த பின்பும், அந்த அரசன் வேஷம் போட்ட நடிகர் மேடையில் நின்று கொண்டே ஸ்வரவரிசையோடுதான், ஏன் விஷம் குடிக்க நேர்ந்தது என்று பாடுவார். அப்படி பாடி முடிந்த பின்பு, அந்த பாத்திரத்திற்கேற்ப பாவனை செய்து விழுந்து விட்டாலும், அவர் பாடிய நாடகப் பாடல் மக்களுக்குப் பிடித்திருந்தால் அவர்கள் 'ஒன்ஸ்மோ' (மீண்டும் ஒரு முறை) என்று குரல் கொடுப்பார்கள். அவர் மீண்டும் எழுந்து நின்று பாடுவார். அப்படிப் பாடாவிட்டால் நாடகத்தில் மிகுந்த கலாட்டா ஏற்படும். இப்படி வளர்ந்த நாடகக் கலையை தேசிய கண்ணோட்டத்திற்குத் திருப்பியவர்கள் கிருஷ்ணசாமி பாவலர், விக்ரநாத தாஸ், சாமிநாத சர்மா, கோவை அய்யாமுத்து போன்ற தேசபக்தர்கள் ஆவார்கள்.

அன்று வெள்ளையனின் ஆட்சி கொடிகட்டிப் பறந்த நேரத்திலும் விக்ரநாத தாஸ் அவர்களை எதிர்த்து மேடையில் பிரசாரப்படல்களைப் பாடுவார். உடனே அதிகாரிகள் மேடையில் ஏறி, அவரைக் கைது செய்வார்கள். அவர் சிறைக்குச் செல்வார். அத்தோடு நாடகம் முடிந்துவிடும். இதைக் காண்பதே பெறும்பேறு என்று அன்று நாடகம் காண வந்த மக்களும் உண்டு. ஏறத்தாழ அதே காலத்தில் ஒரு புறம் படித்தவர்கள் சிலரால் நாடகக்கலை சீர்திருத்தப்பட சமூக நாடகங்களும் தமிழகத்தில் தலையெடுக்க ஆரம்பித்தன. அப்படி நடத்தப்பட்ட நாடகங்களிலும் புராண கதைகளில் போதித்த தத்துவங்களும் தர்மங்களும் தான் வேறு வடிவத்தில் சொல்லப்பட்டன.

முழுமையாக சமூக நாடகங்கள் என்று தமிழகத்தில் தோன்றியவை நவாப் டி.என். ராஜமாணிக்கம் அவர்களால் நடத்தப்பட்ட "பிரபல சந்திரா" என்ற நாடகமும், திரு. எஸ். எஸ். வாசன் அவர்களால் எழுதப்பட்டு, நாடகத் தந்தை திரு. கந்தசாமி முதலியார் அவர்களால்

நாடக வடிவம் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட 'சதி லீலாவதி', முத்தமிழ் கலா வித்வ ரத்ன டி.கே.எஸ். சகோதரர்கள் "மேனகா", திரு. சம்பந்த முதலியாரின் "சபாபதி", மற்றும் "மையன் ராஜர்மணி", "கதரின் வெற்றி", "பதிபக்தி", "இழந்த காதல்", "விமலா" போன்ற நாடகங்களே ஆகும்.

இப்படி நாடகக் கலை சமூக நிகழ்ச்சிகளை நோக்கி வெகு வேகமாக முன்னேறிக்கொண்டு வந்த தருணத்தில் இங்கு சினிமாத் கலை வளரத் தொடங்கியது. வடநாட்டு இந்தியப் படங்களும், வெளிநாட்டு ஆங்கிலப் படங்களும் தமிழகத்தில் மதிப்புப்பெறத் தொடங்கின. அவைகளைக் கண்டு ரசித்த மக்கள், நாடகங்களில் அதே போன்ற அமைப்பு முறைகளை எதிர்பார்த்தார்கள். மக்களின் ரசனைபை உணர்ந்த கலைஞர்களும் நாடகங்களை நவநாகரிக முறையில் அமைத்து நடிக்கத் தொடங்கினார்கள். அப்பொழுதும் தமிழகத்தின் பண்பும், கலாசாரமும் நாடகக் கதைகளையோ வசனங்களையோ விட்டு வெளியே போய்விடவில்லை.

வெளிநாட்டு வாழ்க்கை முறையையொட்டி தமிழ் நாடகங்களிலோ, திரைப்படங்களிலோ நிகழ்ச்சிகள் வருமானால் அவைகளை மக்கள் தவறான முறை (wrong sentiment) என்று குறை கூறுவார்கள். இதற்கிடையில் சினிமாத் கலை மக்களிடம் செல்வாக்கு பெறத் தொடங்கியது.

அவைகளில் வியாபார நோக்கத்தைப்பொட்டி படமெடுத்தவர்கள் வெளிநாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சிகளையும், ஆடை வகைகளையும் இனக் கவர்ச்சியையுடனும் வகையில் பயன்படுத்தத் துவங்கினார்கள். முதலில் கவர்ச்சியில் மயங்கிய மக்கள், பின்பு நம் பண்பாட்டிற்கு அப்பாற்பட்ட நிகழ்ச்சிகளையும் சரியான முறை (correct sentiment) என்று ஒப்புக் கொள்ளத் துவங்கினார்கள். இது மது அருந்திவர் குடிப்பது நியாயம் என்று வாதாடுவது போலாகும். இதற்கிடையில் நாடகங்களில் அரசியலும் அதிக இடம் பிடிக்கத் தொடங்கின.

திரு. விஸ்வநாத தாஸ் காலத்தில் தேசிய உணர்ச்சியையும், எழுச்சியையும் ஊட்டுவதற்காக நாடகத்தில் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்ட அரசியல் முறைகள், பின்பு ஒருவரையொருவர் வசைபாடுவதற்காகப் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. நாடக மேடையில் அரசியல் தெருச்சண்டைகள் அதிகமாயின. பூதாகாரமாக வளர்ந்து வந்த இந்தக் கொடுமையான முறை இன்று தோன்றியதைப் போலவே அழிந்து கொண்டும் இருக்கிறது. அதற்கு நாம், காலத்திற்கோ கடவுளுக்கோ நன்றி சொல்ல வேண்டும்.

இது ஒரு புறமிருக்க, மக்கள் விடிய விடிய நாடகம் பார்த்த காலம் போய், இன்று இரண்டு மணி நேரத்திற்கு மேல் நாடகம் பார்க்கும் பொறுமை இல்லாமல் போய்விட்டது. முன்பு கண்மூடி கண்திறக்கும் நேரத்திற்குள் காட்சி ஜோடனைகள் மாறவேண்டும் என்ற நிலைமாரி, இப்பொழுது ஒரே காட்சியில் நாடகம் முழுவதையும் நடத்தும் முறையும் புகுத்தப்பட்டுவிட்டது. நாடகக்காரன் என்றாலே ஒதுக்கப்பட்டவன் என்றிருந்த காலம் போய், இன்று வீட்டிற்கு வீடு நடிக்கர்கள், தெருவிற்குத் தெரு நாடகக்குழுக்கள், மூலைக்கு மூலை நாடகம், என்று நாடகக் கலை பரவலாக வளரத் தொடங்கிவிட்டன.

ஒரு நடிக்கன் போனால் தேவன் போகிறான் என்பது போல் மக்கள் ஆர்வத்தோடு அவனைச் வேடிக்கை பார்த்த காலம் போய், இன்று நடிக்கும் மக்களில் ஒருவனானால் மக்களில்

பலரும் நடிக்கர்கள் ஆனார்கள். இந்த முறை ஓரளவு வரவேற்கக் கூடியதே.

இன்று நாடகங்களும் அதிகமாக நடத்தப்படுகின்றன. மக்களும் அதிகமாக நாடகங்களை விரும்பிப்பார்க்கிறார்கள், என்பதெல்லாம் உண்மைதான். ஆனால் நாடகக் கம்பெனிகள் வைத்து நாடகத்தைத் தொழிலாக நடத்தி வந்த காலத்தில் தோன்றியதைப்போல் நல்ல நடிக்கர்கள் இன்று நமக்குக் கிடைக்கவில்லை என்ற உண்மையும் நாம் ஓரளவு ஒப்புக்கொள்ளத்தான் வேண்டும். காரணம், நாடகக் கம்பெனிகளில் இருந்த நடிக்கர்கள் பெரியவர்களுக்கும், அனுபவத்திற்கும் மரியாதை கொடுத்துத் தொழிலை தெய்வமாக நினைத்துக் கற்றுக் கொண்டார்கள். நடிப்பையே தங்கள் வாழ்வாகக் கொண்டவர்களாதலால், அவர்களின் சிந்தனையெல்லாம் நடிப்பைப் பற்றியே இருந்தது. அதில் பலருக்கு காலம் கைகொடுக்காவிட்டாலும், காலத்தால் வளர்ந்த சிலர் இன்றும் நம்முன் வாழ்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். இன்று சினிமாக்கலையும், டி.வி. யும் நாடகக் கலையோடு போட்டிப் போட்டு வளர்ந்துகொண்டே இருக்கிறது.

நடிக்கர்களைப் பொறுத்தவரை நாடகமும், சினிமாவும் இரண்டும் தேவைதான். என்றாலும் நாடகம் தான் தாய் என்பதை நாம் மறக்கக்கூடாது. படம் எடுப்பவர்கள் சரியான கதையை, அதைப்படம் எடுக்கும் சரியான முறையைப் பயன்படுத்தாமல், அவர்கள் இஷ்டத்திற்குப் படம் எடுத்துவிட்டு நடிக்கர்களையும் மக்களையும் குறை கூறக் கூடாது. படத்தயாரிப்பாளர்களோ நடிக்கர்களோ அனுபவத்திற்கும் வயதிற்கும் மரியாதை கொடுத்து தங்களைவிட அனுபவசாலிகளைக் கலந்தாலோசித்து அவர்களின் அனுபவத்தைப் பெற்று படம் எடுத்தால், நடித்தால், நாடகம், சினிமா இரண்டு கலையுமே செழித்து வளரும் என்பது என் கருத்து.

இன்று பெரும்பாலும் சினிமா உலகிலும் நாடக உலகிலும் பணத்திற்கு மரியாதை அளிக்கப்படுகிறது. வயதிற்கும் அனுபவத்திற்கும் மரியாதை குறைந்திருக்கிறது என்பதை நாம் ஒப்புக்கொள்ளத்தான் வேண்டும்.

பெரியவர்களிடம் வாழ்த்துப்பெற்றால்தான் நன்றாக இருப்போம். நடிக்கர்களும், படாதிபதிகளும் மனிதர்களே! நமக்கு முன் வாழ்ந்து சரிந்த நடிக்கர்களையும், படாதிபதிகளின் வாழ்க்கை வரலாற்றையும் பார்த்து, நம்மை நம் திருத்திக் கொள்ளாவிட்டால் நம்மைக் காப்பாற்ற தெய்வத்தால் கூட முடியாது.

எனவே நடிக்க நண்பர்களுக்கு ஒன்று சொல்லுவேன். கலைக்கும், வயதிற்கும், அனுபவத்திற்கும், காலத்திற்கும் மதிப்பளித்து, நாம் நாடகக் கலையை வளர்க்கத் தொடங்கினால், இங்கு நாடகங்கள் தான் நிலைத்து நிற்கும். நாமும் நாடகக் கலையும் நல்லாழ்வு பெறலாம். இன்று சினிமாவே வாழ்வெனக் கருதி வாழும் சில நடிக்கர்களுக்கு நாமும் இங்கு வாழ்வளிக்கலாம் என்பதை நீங்கள் நினைவில் வைத்துக்கொள்ளவேண்டும்.

வாழ்க தமிழ் !! வளர்க நாடகக் கலை !!!

“பத் கவித பிதாமஹா”

தாள்ளபாக்கம் ஸ்ரீ அன்னமாச்சாரியார்

இரு புதல்வர்களும், திருமலம்பா என்ற மகளும் உண்டு. இவருடைய பேரன் சின்ன திருவேங்கு நாதர் இவருடன் கூடவே இருந்து இவருடைய பாடல்களை எழுதி வைத்துள்ளான். தவிர, தெலுங்கு திவிபதி செய்யுள் நடையில் அன்னமாச்சாரியாரின் வாழ்க்கை வரலாற்றையும் எழுதியுள்ளான்.

சிலகாலம் இல்லறத்தில் ஈடுபட்டிருந்த அன்னமாச்சாரியார் பின்னர் அகோபிலம் சென்று ஆகிவண் சடகோப யதீந்திரரை அடைந்து, திவ்வியப்பிரபந்தம், வேதாந்தம் முதலானவற்றை பூரணமாக அறிந்தார். இவருடைய குரல் இனிமையைக் கண்டு, நாரதரோ, தும்புருவோ என்று எல்லோரும் அதிசயித்தனர். இவருடைய பெருமையை கேள்விப்பட்ட டங்கடூர் மன்னன் சாளுவ நரசிம்மன் அன்னமாச்சாரியாரை அழைத்து தன்னுடன் வைத்துக் கொண்டான். அதுவரையிலும் சிற்றரசனாக இருந்தவன் ஆசாரியார் அருளால் பெணுகொண்டா பேரரசனானான். அதே சமயம், இவ்வளவு அருமையாகப் பாடலை இயற்றும் அன்னமாச்சாரியார் தன் மீதும் பாட வேண்டும் என்ற கீழ்த்தரமான எண்ணத்திற்கு ஆட்பட்டான். 'திருமாலேத் தவிர வேறு யாரையும் பாடமாட்டேன்' என்று மறுத்து விட்டதால், கை கால்களுக்கு விலங்கிட்டு அன்னமாச்சாரியாரைச் சிறையில் அடைத்தான் மன்னன். ஆனால், திருவேங்குமுடையான் அருளால் விலங்குகள் தானே அறுபட்டு விழுந்தன. இதைக் கண்டு வியந்த மன்னன் செய்த தவறை உணர்ந்து மன்னிப்புக் கேட்டான். ஏராளமான மானியங்களை வழங்கினான்.

இது போன்று கிடைத்த மானியங்களையும், வெகுமதிகளையும் கொண்டு திருமலை கோயில் பிராகாரம் கட்டி, திருக்குளம் வெட்டினார். திவ்விய நாம சங்கீர்த்தன சேவை, திருக்கல்யாண உற்சவ சேவை, ஏகாந்த சேவை முதலியவற்றை ஏற்படுத்தி தானும், தனது சந்ததியினரும் இவற்றை தொடர்ந்து செய்ய வேண்டும் என்று சிலா சாலனமும் எழுதி வைத்தார். தமது கீர்த்தனங்களைச் செப்புத் தகட்டில் பதித்து கோயில் பண்டாரகாவில் வைத்தார்.

அதுவரையிலும் செய்யுள் நடையில் இருந்த பாடல்களை முதன் முதலாக பல்லவி, சரணங்கள் என்று கீர்த்தனை வடிவில் கொண்டு வந்தவர் அன்னமாச்சாரியார். 'வேங்கட' முத்திரையுடன் ஒரு நாளைக்கு ஒரு பாடலாக 32000 கீர்த்தனங்கள் இயற்றியுள்ளார். சிருங்கார கீர்த்தனங்கள், ஆத்யாத்ம சங்கீர்த்தனங்கள், சிருங்கார மஞ்சரி, 12 சதகங்கள், இரண்டடி ராமாயணம், வெங்கடாசல மஹாத்மியம், சங்கீர்த்தன லக்ஷணம் ஆகியவற்றை இயற்றினார். *

"ஹரி கீர்த்தனாச்சாரியார்", "பதகவித பிதாமஹ", என்று அழைக்கப்பட்ட தாளன்பாக்கம் ஸ்ரீ அன்னமாச்சாரியார் தனது 95-வது வயதில், 1503 பிப்ரவரி 23-ஆம் தேதி திருவேங்குமுடையான் திருவடியில் சேர்ந்தார்.

* "ஷண்முகா" ஜனவரி 1999 இதழில் ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி நேதுனூரி கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி அவர்கள் நிகழ்த்திய அன்னமாச்சாரியாரின் 'ரசகுக்களை' பற்றிய ஸங்கீத விபிஷரை பிரசுரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.